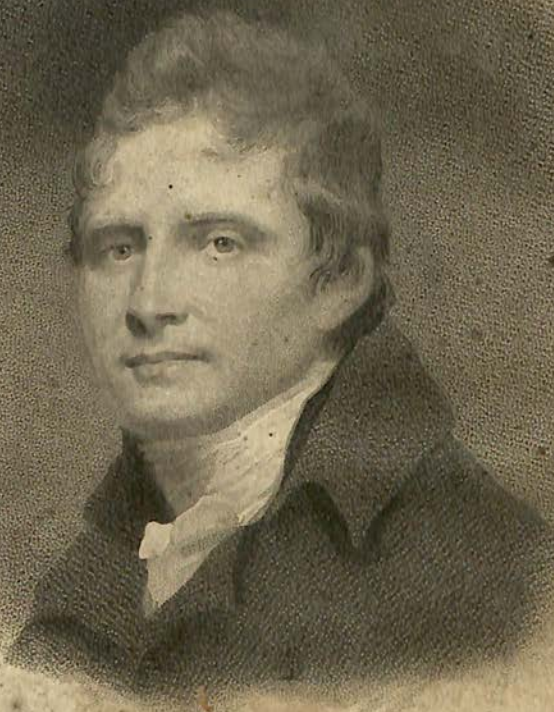
00026491

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 April, 2016

LOWELL
BRANCH
OF THE
ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY



Thomas Brown M.D

PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY

IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Engraved by W. Holl from a Painting by [illegible]

ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS BROWN, M.D.

LATE PROFESSOR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

26491

BY THE

REV. DAVID WELSH,

MINISTER OF CROSSMICHAEL.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR W. & C. TAIT, 78, PRINCE'S STREET;

AND LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, BROWN, & GREEN,

LONDON.

1825.

00026491

PRINTED BY A. BALFOUR AND CO.

PREFACE.

THE merits of Dr. Brown were of too conspicuous a nature not to excite an interest respecting his private character; and, upon his lamented death, though it was generally known that his peaceful history could afford few materials for biography, there was a very general desire that a memorial should be traced of his virtues and his genius. While there were many distinguished individuals, who had been connected with him by the ties of friendship, who could have brought to this office the splendour of talents congenial to his own, it has, by circumstances which it is unnecessary to mention, devolved upon one

who can pretend to scarcely any other qualification for it but great devotion to the subject. I may be allowed, however, to state, that it is an honour to which I did not aspire, and which I would have willingly declined, had the request to undertake it been of a nature that allowed me to consult my own feelings only.

In a long and familiar intercourse with Dr. Brown, I became acquainted with many of the events of his life, and had an opportunity of observing his habits of thinking and acting. I was aided also by information most liberally supplied by his relatives, to whom he had left the care of his manuscripts. Indeed the facilities they afforded, and the confidence they reposed in me, rendered my labours agreeable and comparatively easy. I derived particular advantage from a letter containing an account of his life, written by his sister, Miss Brown, whose lamented death prevents me from having the gratification of making a public acknowledgment to her

along with her sisters who survive, of the many obligations under which I have been laid by their friendship. For the valuable assistance afforded me by many of the other relatives and friends of Dr. Brown, I have to return my warmest thanks.

In the account of Dr. Brown's philosophical works, my object has been, not to give an outline of all his doctrines, but rather to seize upon those principles by which his writings are distinguished from those of preceding philosophers, and the discovery of which will constitute an era in the history of metaphysical science. While I entirely coincide in the leading tenets of his system, there are a few subordinate points with which I do not altogether agree; and, in these instances, I have endeavoured to state the grounds upon which I differ from him, with that respectful freedom which is sanctioned by his own example.

In my delineation of Dr. Brown's character, I am well aware of many defici-

encies, and must therefore entreat those who may honour the following work with their perusal, to keep in mind the words of Cicero upon an occasion somewhat similar.—*Neque enim quisquam nostrum, cum libros Platonis mirabiliter scriptos legit, in quibus omnibus fere Socrates exprimitur, non, quanquam illa scripta sunt divinitus, tamen majus quiddam de illo, de quo scripta sunt, suspicatur. Quod item nos postulamus...a cæteris, qui hæc in manus sument, ut majus quiddam de L. Crasso, quam quantum a nobis exprimetur, suspicentur.**

* De Oratore, lib. iii. cap. 4.

CONTENTS.

Page

CHAPTER I.

Birth and Education 1

CHAPTER II.

Observations on Darwin's Zoonomia 42

CHAPTER III.

Choice of a Profession 72

CHAPTER IV.

Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect . . . 98

CHAPTER V.

Appointment to the Chair of Moral Philosophy . . . 157

CHAPTER VI.

Lectures on the Philosophy of the Human Mind . . 198

Page

CHAPTER VII.

Successive Publications 326

CHAPTER VIII.

Poetical Works 396

CHAPTER IX.

Death and Character 438

Notes 491

ACCOUNT

OF THE

LIFE AND WRITINGS

OF

THOMAS BROWN, M. D.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EDUCATION.

THOMAS BROWN, M.D., late Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, was the son of the Rev. Samuel Brown, minister of Kirkmabreck, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, and of Mary Smith, daughter of John Smith, Esq. of Wigton.

The family of the Browns from whom he was descended by the father were remarkable for great cheerfulness and benevolence of temper. Their charities are still remembered in that part of the country where they resided; and a cave is shown

where, in the time of the persecutions of Charles II., they used every night to leave a supply of provisions for a party of the covenanters. The names of some of his maternal ancestors appear in the histories of the persecution, in the number of those who were banished from Scotland on account of their adherence to the covenant. *

His grandfather, the Rev. Samuel Brown, was appointed minister of the united parishes of Kirkmabreck and Kirkdale about the beginning of the last century. He died, in 1752, at the advanced age of ninety; and throughout the whole course of his long ministry he seems to have been much beloved and respected in his parish. He was succeeded in his charge by his youngest son, Dr. Brown's father, a man of great modesty and worth, who applied himself zealously and conscientiously to the discharge of the duties of his profession. The time that was not required by his parish or his family he devoted to letters and philosophy—the only relaxation in which he thought it suitable for a clergyman to indulge. His wife was of a temper congenial to his own. She was a woman of great sweetness of disposition, of singular elegance and gentleness of manners, and exemplary in her devotion to domestic duties. They had a family of thirteen children. Dr. Brown was the youngest.

* See Note A.

He was born at the manse of Kirkmabreck, on the 9th day of January 1778. He was a stout healthy child, with a remarkably pleasing expression of countenance. From infancy he had a great love of music. His mother used to lull him asleep with *the flowers of the forest*—a tune for which he ever after retained a great partiality, as he never heard it without thinking of her.

His father's health had long been very delicate, and for several months before his death, he felt that the separation between him and his family was fast approaching. This led him to view them with an increasing interest; and it was observed that his attention was particularly directed to his youngest son. When he saw his wife looking sad, he would pat the child's head, and say, "Remember that I have told you, that this little fellow will be a blessing to you when I am gone." This prediction received a fulfilment far beyond what Mr. Brown could have anticipated. At this early period, the promise of his son's genius was only beginning, if it could be said to be beginning to open; and we cannot suppose that even parental partiality could look forward to that eminence which Mrs. Brown was spared to witness, or to that devotion of heart to her which formed so striking a part of Dr. Brown's character, and which, admirably though she was

qualified for appreciating the efforts of his talents, was felt by her, more than the pride of his genius or his success in life, to make him *a blessing to her when her husband was no more.* The anecdote was not forgotten by Mrs. Brown; and when her son was paying her some of those little pleasing attentions which he was in the habit of showing, she would at times mention it to him. It may be believed that he never heard it unmoved.—Mr. Brown died on his way to Edinburgh, whither he had been recommended to go for medical advice. His widow remained in possession of the manse about a year after his death, when she removed with her family to Edinburgh.

It was here that Dr. Brown received the first rudiments of his education. The activity of his mind made him feel altogether unhappy that he was not able to read; and he gave his mother no rest till she began to teach him. This was before he was three years old. In the first lesson, he learned all the letters of the alphabet. Every succeeding step was equally remarkable; and before he was four he could read in the most distinct manner any book he met with.

The Bible was his class-book; and I have much satisfaction in being able to add his testimony to that of many other great men to its excellence in this respect. Independently of its influence in a

moral and religious point of view, which he was always abundantly ready to acknowledge, he was of opinion, that the many simple and beautiful narratives which are to be found in it, render it invaluable as an elementary book of instruction.

He was soon familiar with every part of Scripture history, and showed a spirit of inquiry respecting it far above his years. An anecdote that is related of him about this period is sufficiently illustrative of this. At the same time, when I mention that it happened when he was between four and five, I feel it necessary to assure the reader, that I do not state it without the most satisfactory evidence of its truth.—A lady one day entering into his mother's parlour, found him alone, sitting on the floor with a large family Bible on his knee, which he was dividing into different parts with one of his hands. She asked him if he was going to preach, as she saw he was looking for a text. "No," said he; "I am only wishing to see what the Evangelists differ in; for they do not all give the same account of Christ."

His curiosity was not confined to his class-book; nor did he think he had done enough when he prepared all that his mother prescribed. From the moment he was able to read, books became his passion; and he perused every thing he could lay hold of. During a very dangerous illness with which he was seized before he was five,

his friends found great difficulty in getting him to remain at rest. Fortunately an immense volume of old ballads was procured for him; and with them he was so much delighted, that he continued quietly in bed till he had got the greater part of them by heart. Though nothing could be more different from his own style of composition, he always retained a great love for ballads. In the preface to his Paradise of Coquettes, he has pointed out, with much delicacy of criticism, the advantages of this species of writing, from the vivid abruptness of its transitions, and the graphic fidelity of its pictures, and the great charm that the legendary romance derives from its association with the feelings of early years in the romantic literature and traditionary lore of the nursery.

Every thing relating to Bruce and Wallace he read with the most intense delight; and he took such an interest in the tragedy of Cato, as to get the greater part of it by heart. The powers of his memory were always very great. He remembered, almost without an effort, any passage that interested him; and it was one of his greatest pleasures to recite what he had thus learned. There was a retired walk in his mother's garden to which he often betook himself, and where he was heard declaiming aloud with great energy his favourite passages.

He did not attend any of the schools in Edinburgh. His education there was entirely of a domestic nature, and his mother was his only tutor. Like all clever children, he liked to be with those who were older than himself. Hitherto his chief companions had been his sisters, who remember him to have had a remarkable sweetness of temper. It was only when he thought he had been unjustly used that he ever showed the slightest anger; and then nothing could prevail with him to ask pardon for any little offence he might have committed. He considered it to be a great mistake in education, to make a child acknowledge its fault and ask pardon, at the moment its mind was filled with indignation on account of the punishment it had received, which, in many cases, might have been inflicted for what it could not help, or did not think wrong. And even when the punishment was necessary, the little culprit, at the moment of irritation, would be apt to think it greater than the offence.—A bad boy, or at least one who had little strength of mind, would, he thought, be the most ready to make submissions.

In mentioning these circumstances in this early stage of Dr. Brown's history, I would not wish to be considered as attaching any very extraordinary importance to them;—neither do I conceive that they ought to be entirely overlooked. To those, who make the varieties of genius a subject of observation, it is interesting to have an oppor-

tunity of marking it in its earliest appearances. And though nothing would be more rash, than to consider those indications, which make every smart child be looked upon as a little wonder by the partial circle of which he is the idol, as sure prognostics of future greatness, yet the manifestations of mind in youth, and almost even in infancy, often afford a key to the secret and real tendencies of the character. The case of Dr. Brown affords an additional comfirmation of the remark, that where activity of intellect and delicacy of feeling are the predominant characteristics, there will always be early indications of them.

In the middle of his seventh year he was removed to London, under the protection of his maternal uncle, Captain Smith, of the 37th regiment, who, having formerly acted as secretary and paymaster-general to the provincial forces under General Sir Henry Clinton, when commander-in-chief in America, had retired from the service, and was now resident in the metropolis. Captain Smith placed him at first in a school at Camberwell. There, he was looked upon as a little prodigy for the extent of his knowledge; and his temper was so cheerful, that he went by the name of *the little laugher*. He remained at this school only a single year; his uncle having removed him from it, upon learning that it was attended by a number of boys from Scotland—a circumstance which he was afraid might pre-

vent him from getting so speedily rid of the Scotch accent. Soon after he left this school, a young clergyman, a brother of his master's, waited upon Mrs. Thomson, one of Dr. Brown's sisters, who was at that time in London;—in speaking of his young pupil, he was affected to the shedding of tears, and said he could not help envying the man who should have the honour of teaching such a boy.

The next school in which he was placed was at Chiswick, where he remained several years. It was here that he gave the first promise of his genius for poetry. The death of Charles I. having been given as a theme, the master was so much pleased with his copy of verses, that he immediately presented him with a very flattering reward; and a short time afterwards showed him a magazine with his production in it. To see any thing of his own in print, was what, at this tender age, he had never once formed an idea of; and he never read any of his works with half the pride and pleasure that he did this little poem.

As more attention was paid to the classics at this school than corresponded with his uncle's ideas, he resolved—not very wisely perhaps—to place him elsewhere. It was a regulation, that when a boy had been once removed from it to another, he should not again be received. Upon the present occasion, however, a *round robin*, signed by the whole school, was sent to the mas-

ter, begging him to take back *Tom Brown*, should he wish to return; and another was sent to himself, entreating him to come back to them. But to this his uncle refused to consent, and placed him in a school at Bromley.

As he was farther advanced than the rest of the boys, his progress in classical learning, during the two years he continued at Bromley, was not great. From the beauty of the situation, however, and the delightful walks in which the scholars were indulged, he looked back to the time that he spent there with as much pleasure as to any other period during his education in England.

The last school he attended was at Kensington, under Dr. Thomson. He left it before he had reached his sixteenth year.

During all this time he was distinguished, not more for his talents than for his amiable dispositions. At some of the schools which he attended, there was a public recitation previous to the holidays. His appearance was so engaging, that many of the relations of the other children used to crowd around him, and entreat him to accompany them, thinking that, as he was from Scotland, he might otherwise have to remain at school.

At some of the above seminaries he met with individuals of considerable distinction. The late Earl Cowper, with his brothers, were his class-

fellows at Kensington; and at Chiswick, among others, the present Sir John Copley, attorney-general of England. During the time he was at school he formed many friendships, which continued till the end of his life. At Kew, where his uncle resided, he became acquainted with the family of the Grahams,—mother and sisters of Sir Robert Graham, now senior baron of the English Exchequer. On the friendship of this family he always set the highest value. The family consisted of Mrs. Graham, her two daughters, and several grandchildren of the name of Massie, some of whom were about his own time of life. To Miss Jane Massie a great many of his early productions in verse were addressed. This beautiful and accomplished young woman died a few years after he returned to Scotland; and I believe her death produced an effect upon his feelings that was never obliterated. Mrs. Elizabeth Graham, herself a person of high literary attainments, was ready duly to appreciate and foster those of others. She was one of the first to discover the aspirings of his early genius. She soothed and encouraged his juvenile efforts, and became his correspondent in afterlife.

The first day she saw him she was prejudiced in his favour, by an anecdote which, though it may appear trifling, may be mentioned as illustrative of his character. He was introduced

to the family by a young gentleman who was a keen sportsman, and rather vain of the spirit of a favourite dog. As they were walking together, they came upon a wounded crow, and the gentleman with the thoughtlessness of youth set his dog upon it. The boy burst into tears when he saw it torn in pieces, and expressed the greatest anger at such thoughtless cruelty. This was mentioned to Mrs. Graham as a ludicrous exhibition of feeling. But she viewed it in another light, and was struck equally with his tenderness of heart and his courage in so warmly expressing his indignation. From that day he became a favourite with her.

The influence she had upon his character, with the happiness he enjoyed in her society, is very beautifully described in the introductory verses to the volume entitled *Emily*, which is inscribed to *Mrs. Elizabeth Graham of Kingston, Surrey.*

Ere one feeble line
My youthful heart had dared, that heart was thine,
So warmly thine, that years of sager lore,
More skilled to prize thee, scarce could love thee more.

In boyhood's sunny dawn, when, at thy side,
A happy guest, I sought my seat of pride,
With what glad fondness, on thy words I hung,
While gravest truths seemed cheerful from thy tongue;
Yet happier, when thy hand would sometimes press
My cheek, that kindled in the sweet caress,
And nobler visions on my soul would ope,
In that best praise, which whispered future hope.

Ev'n now can memory well the day renew,
When my first careless rhymes had caught thy view.
Not more the wretch, beneath the judge's eye,
Shrinks from the stern cold frown he cannot fly,
Than droop'd my trembling glance, while beamed above
That gentle gaze whose only look was love.—
How blest in that still partial smile to find
The quick approval of a heart too kind;
Proud to be deemed thy Poet—but the fame
Less gladdening, than the love which deigned the name.

To Mrs. Graham also, one of his finest short poems is addressed, under the title of *An Early Friend.*

The time spent in the house of Mrs. Graham, at Kew Green, he always looked back to as one of the most interesting parts of his life. His recollections of that interesting family are embodied in a short poem of exquisite beauty accompanying his *Wanderer in Norway*, where he tenderly describes the sensations arising upon his finding the house no longer the abode of the friends he had loved so well. In intensity and delicacy of feeling, and fidelity of painting, it will remind the reader of Cowper's Lines to Anne Bodham upon receiving his Mother's Picture; while the mellowness and flow of the versification are more in the style of Goldsmith. I shall insert the whole poem, not merely as affording a specimen of his poetical talents, but as containing a faithful picture of the amiable minds which contributed so largely to form his character. It was writ-

ten after a visit to London, a few years before his death, and is entitled

RECOLLECTIONS,

On seeing again, after a long absence, a House on KEW GREEN, *in which I had spent, in Boyhood, many of the most delightful hours of my life.*

THIS is the dwelling.—Oft, in boyish sport,
My step has danced along that silent court,
When my full bosom deem'd, with eager glow,
The ready portal's quickest opener slow:—
Still sure within that cheerful room to find
Kind eyes, kind voices,—and, O! hearts more kind.

This is the dwelling;—but the look, the tone,
The heart, that gave the gladness,—all are flown.
Yet, while these trees wave o'er me, and I hear
Each well-known branch still rustling in my ear,
See the same window, where, as day grew pale,
I sat, oft lingering o'er some half-read tale,
Scarce can I think, within that home-like door
No voice of love would bless me, as before.

Ye fondly lov'd,—so tender, yet so gay!—
Lights of my youth! ye now are far away.
All!—O that, even tho' distant, not bereft,
Still, where this heart might find you, *all* were left!
But where is she,—the loveliness,—who taught
My soul a charm it knew not even in thought,
When still I gaz'd, that gentle eye to meet,
And wonder'd what a smile could beam so sweet?—
And where that younger smiler,—since the hour
When last we laugh'd, a bride in stately bower,—
Whom never yet my heart has learn'd to claim,
And scarce has lov'd, but by an earlier name?—
And where the Matron, on whose brow serene
Age traced no wrinkle,—where no frown had been,—

Still first, when every circling look was glad,
To lead the frolic, as to sooth the sad?—
They live not.—Ne'er again a glance shall rise
Of joy-reflecting kindness, in those eyes;—
Earth, like the porch where still my gaze is cast,
A lonely gloom,—that speaks but of the past.

O no!—The joy of other years to give,
Ye sav'd of that kind circle! still ye live.
Yours still the family of all whose woe
Needs what a sage or soother can bestow,
And voices of the glad, that sweetest thrill,—
The glad, that, but for you, were wretched *still*.
Ye live;—and oft *again*, in other bowers,
Shall bless me *all* that bless'd *in long-past hours*;—
Not with *less fondness, that, some links apart*,
A narrower closer *chain* now binds the heart,—
And O! most tender, when our theme anew
Still leads us here,—to all which now I view.

Calm have thy changes pass'd.—Since first was spread
That sheltering roof, how many years have fled!
And many a wintry tempest, ere thou fall,
May rush in vain to shake thy massy wall.
Yet then, if in thy annals search could find
What wisdom, virtue, beauty, thou hast shrin'd,
Still on those happiest years the toil would rest,
When all were met,—thy loveliest, wisest, best.

Lodge of the stranger,—yet, tho' steps unknown
Sound on thy floor, thyself no stranger grown!
When last I left thee, friends all sadly gay
Hung round my path, to cheer me on my way,
Forc'd with half-mirthful smile, a faint relief,
And spoke of future joy, with hearts of grief:
Even mid that dearest circle, dearer then,
Oft turn'd I, sad, to view thee yet again;
As if my heart, ere fear the ill could see,
Had presage of dark sorrow, soon to be.

No smiles are round me now.—Yet, while I dwell
With last fond look, and bid a new farewell,
More drear I feel the sadness,—when that door
Still speaks of joy, yet says, Approach no more!
And half I seem, my soul at once to tear
From thy lov'd home—and all who lov'd me there.

Nor are these the mere exaggerations or embellishments of poetical fancy. The feeling was as real as the expression of it is beautiful. It was even stronger than he represents it. He was altogether overpowered at the sight, and fainted away. Upon the publication of the poem, when I expressed my opinion of the fidelity of the painting, and remarked that it must find an answering chord in every bosom; he replied, that it was impossible, for no language could convey any idea of the feelings he experienced.

We now approach a period when he was destined to act a more decided part in life, and to follow more the bent of his own mind in the course of his literary pursuits. This was occasioned by the death of his uncle in 1792. After that event, he continued in England about four months, when bidding adieu to London and its vicinity, he arrived again in Edinburgh under his maternal roof. He was now about sixteen years of age, having attended the English academies about seven years.

Of the particular progress that he made at the different schools he attended, I have not learned

any thing with accuracy. He certainly distinguished himself in them all, and his proficiency in classical literature was very great. Upon his return to Scotland, he used to read aloud to his sisters in English, from a Latin or Greek author, and no person could have suspected that he was translating.

I have already alluded to the powers of his memory, and to the extraordinary facility with which he got any thing by heart. One of his masters, when speaking of him to a friend, mentioned an example of this. The punishment usually awarded for transgressing the bounds of the play-ground, was to commit to memory a passage of some author. Dr. Brown incurred this penalty more frequently than any other boy at the school,—indeed it was the only offence with which he was ever charged; and the punishment from his great quickness he did not much regard. "I resolved, however,"—to use his teacher's own words, "to fix him for once, and gave him a task, that I thought even he should not be able to get in a hurry; soon after, I was called out of the room, and to my utter astonishment, when I returned, which was in a very few minutes, he came up and repeated it every word without making the slightest mistake." When the anecdote was mentioned to Dr. Brown, he recollected the circumstance, and added, that he was very impatient for his master's return, as he was pre-

pared for him some time before he made his appearance. He also mentioned, that the passage contained the beautiful description of Adam and Eve in Paradise, and that he was struck with the effect of the following pause :—

hung over her
Enamoured.

The association has given him a partiality for it, which may be observed in his own poetry.

In consequence of the excellence of his memory, he seldom thought of looking at his lesson, till he had left himself no more time than to read it once over; and he often used to say, that he should have been quite idle, but for the pleasure he took in assisting his companions. The recollection of this was probably one of the reasons of his admiration of the system of *mutual tuition*, by which appropriate occupation is found for every scholar, whatever his talents or acquirements may be. The same remark may be extended to penmanship. Under the Madras system, this branch of instruction is made an interesting part of what is really a *ludus literarius*. Under the old system it is an irksome drudgery; and this Dr. Brown felt so much, that he often left his task in the middle, and made a circuit of the play-ground, before he could finish it. I may here mention that he paid little attention to his hand-writing in

early life. He afterwards, however, came to consider it as of more importance, as may be perceived from the minute and delicate elegance by which it is characterised.

Hitherto his reading had been extensive but desultory. Works of imagination were what he most delighted in. His appetite for books was altogether insatiable. At one school he read through the village circulating library. The librarian was prevailed upon by him to put the books under the door of the play-ground. His uncle's library was not very extensive; fortunately, however, there was a copy of Shakspeare in it, which he regularly read through, every time he paid him the accustomed visit during the holidays.

At this period an accident occurred which prevents me from being more particular respecting his habits of study, or the progress he had made in his education. For some time past he had been a collector of books. All his pocket money was laid out in the purchase of valuable works; and these, with his prizes, and the presents he had received from his companions, formed a considerable library. Upon coming to Scotland, he travelled by land, leaving his books and papers to be sent by sea; and he took the precaution of directing that they should not be sent till the end of winter. But his care was in vain; and when looking for the arrival of his precious store, the

vessel that conveyed them was lost, in fine weather, on a sand-bank in Yarmouth Roads. To those who value books only by what they cost, the loss will not appear great. In the history of a man of letters, however, it ranks as an event of considerable importance;* the feelings of such an individual respecting his library, forming an interesting feature in his character. Dr. Brown always remembered the circumstance with regret, and considered it as one of the greatest misfortunes of his early life.

The property which he most valued was his books; and for them he showed an interest unusually great. This interest was increased by a practice adopted by him at an early period, of marking every passage or form of expression that appeared worthy of notice. The same course has been followed by many men of letters, though by few so simply, so judiciously, and so systematically. He never read without a pencil in his hand, and ultimately had no pleasure in

* On this account there are few circumstances which appear to me more characteristic of the amiable mind of Fénélon, than his saying upon his library being destroyed by fire: *It is better than if it had been the cottage of a poor family.* This saying has been preserved by d'Alembert, who justly considers it as very superior to the well-known remark of the great scholar, who saw his books destroyed by a similar accident. *I would have profited very little by my books if I had not known how to bear the loss of them.*

reading a book that was not his own. It is not easy to estimate all the advantages with which this method is attended; and few directions of more practical benefit could be given to the young student, than uniformly to follow it. It abbreviates labour, gives a double hold of every author, and, by keeping the attention constantly alive, and requiring a continual exercise of the judgment, it increases the benefit of reading, as a means of mental culture, to a degree that is almost inconceivable. Dr. Brown used to say that it is attended only with one bad effect; as it leads us to recur only to the beauties of favourite authors, and to omit the indifferent passages, we are apt to receive an unfavourable impression of a new work upon a first perusal.

I have only to add, upon this subject, that his marks were extremely minute; and that he thought it not unworthy of his attention, that their appearance upon the page should be pleasing rather than offensive to the eye. Their form was varied also, according to the purpose he had in view in placing them, a circumstance which makes his books valuable to those who understand the method he followed It is like reading with a friend.*

I may here notice another practice which Dr. Brown followed in his reading, though not so

* See Note B.

uniformly, and not till several years after the period to which I at present refer. Before beginning to read upon any subject,* he considered for a short time what his own ideas upon it were, and how he would treat of it: after perusal, he compared his author's views and methods with his own; and settled in his mind where the truth lay, and what was the cause of the difference between them, whether in the character of their intellect, or in accidental circumstances.

Dr. Brown may now be considered as upon literary ground, commencing a career, though not noisy, yet as distinguished as has fallen to the lot of any contemporary of his own country. In entering into the University of Edinburgh, he began his course by studying logic under Dr. Finlayson, whose approbation for him was so decidedly expressed, that he felt disappointed, when afterwards, through politics, that individual proved unfriendly to his interests.

The long vacation of the Scotish universities allowed him time to spend part of the summer of 1793 in Liverpool. While there he had the pleasure of being introduced to Dr. Currie, the elegant and benevolent biographer of Burns; who received him with great kindness, and honoured him afterwards with his correspondence. It was

* The same method was followed by Gibbon, as he informs us in his memoirs of himself.

certainly flattering to Dr. Brown to have been thus distinguished at so early a period of his life. But I mention his acquaintance with Dr. Currie, not so much on this account, as because it was the means of directing his attention to a subject in which nature had fitted him to excel, and upon his pre-eminence in which his present fame seems chiefly to rest. About this time the first volume of Mr. Stewart's Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind was published. Dr. Currie put a copy of the work into the hands of his young friend, with a strong recommendation to peruse it. Perhaps this circumstance was accidental, and what he might have done to any young man at the same stage in his studies; though I am rather inclined to think that he must have perceived it to be calculated to attract the notice of his friend. There was something in Dr. Brown's conversation, even when metaphysics was not the subject, which indicated to any one acquainted with the manifestations of intellectual character that this was the science in which he was peculiarly qualified to excel; and it would be doing injustice to Dr. Currie's penetration to suppose that this escaped his notice. I am not one of those who conceive that the genius is determined by the accident of falling in with a book, or meeting with a friend. But certainly there are *occasions* upon which the powers are first called forth, and the genuine character first

exhibits itself. And though, considering the intellectual atmosphere of the Edinburgh university, there seems every reason to suppose that the metaphysical philosophy would ultimately have occupied him, yet the conversation of Dr. Currie, and still more the work he put into his hands—the first metaphysical work he ever read—were calculated to give a more immediate and steady determination to his mental pursuits. Dr. Currie had soon reason to be satisfied with the judiciousness of his recommendation; and was struck not more with the warmth of admiration that his friend expressed, than with the acuteness of his objections to many of the doctrines.

The next winter he attended Mr. Stewart's course of lectures. The delight which he experienced upon that occasion he has described with great beauty in his verses * addressed "to Professor Dugald Stewart, with a copy of *Observations on Dr. Darwin's Zoonomia.*"

His admiration, however, of Mr. Stewart's eloquence did not blind him to the deficiency of analysis which often lurks under the majestically flowing veil of his language and imagery; and the disciple longed to combat his master. As an opening for this, he committed to paper some remarks which he had previously stated in conversation to Dr. Currie, upon one of Mr. Stewart's theories;

* Poetical Works, ii. 117.

and, after much hesitation, he at last summoned courage, and presented himself to Mr. Stewart at the close of one of his lectures, though personally unknown to him. Those who remember the dignified demeanour of Mr. Stewart in his class, which was calculated to convey the idea of one of those great and gifted men who were seen among the groves of the academy, will duly appreciate the boldness of our young philosopher. With great modesty he read his observations; to which, Mr. Stewart with a candour that was to be expected from a philosopher, but which not the less on that account did him infinite honour, listened patiently, and then, with a smile of wonder and admiration, read to him a letter which he had received from the distinguished M. Prevost of Geneva,* containing the same argument that Dr. Brown had stated. This was followed by an invitation to his house, which Dr. Brown received with a delight that was increased by the hope that in the course of familiar conversation he would have an opportunity of entering more fully into this and his other doctrines. Mr. Stewart, however, with a resolution that seems to have extended to his works, declined entering upon this or any other point of controversy. But though he was disappointed in this, he was not disappointed in the kindness

* See Note C.

of Mr. Stewart, or in his uniform, and warm, and generous friendship.

For several years Dr. Brown attended the usual literary and physical classes of the university, enjoying that combination of domestic happiness, and philosophical pursuit, and literary society, which Edinburgh, more perhaps than any other city in the world, affords. In attending the university of Edinburgh there are advantages which we would seek in vain in any other seminary of learning. Among these, at least to an individual like Dr. Brown, I am disposed to enumerate the latitude which is allowed to the students in regard to the employment of their time, when not attending the public prelections. Without at present inquiring whether this system can be defended as advantageous upon the whole, I shall merely observe, that though it may be dangerous to the dissipated or the indolent, it appears to be of the highest advantage to the studious. The vulgarity of a public examination, and the necessity of regular exercises, however well they may be calculated to stimulate dulness, and to render mediocrity respectable, are ill fitted for the ingenious. And much as has been said of the system of conveying instruction by a series of lectures, I am convinced, from personal observation, that an eminent teacher delivering original views, and leaving these to produce their own effect upon the students, has a much greater influence

in exciting a spirit of inquiry than any other method that has yet been devised. The student's mind is stimulated; and the conversation of his fellow students, the tone of society, with the literary clubs that are formed, cherish a spirit that will never be produced by public examinations and enforced theses.

When the period of boyhood is past, the great object of the instructor should be to inspire his pupils with a love of learning and science, to assist them in the first laborious ascent of the hill of knowledge, and to point out some of her goodly prospects, leaving them sufficient time and freedom to try their own strength, and to choose occasionally their own path. Few who are destined to rise to eminence will, in any seminary, satisfy themselves with that portion of knowledge which is conveyed to them by tutors and professors, or confine themselves within the prescribed limits of academic learning. And even before the commencement of the academic course, by far the most delightful, and in some respects by far the most beneficial hours that the youthful mind experiences, are those when, without a guide, he indulges in discursive rambles into the fields of knowledge beyond the *play-grounds*. In one of the letters of West to Gray, there is an allusion to this species of delight which marks well the nature of it, and shows the gratification it had afforded him;—he complains that Gray had for-

gotten "one who had walked hand in hand with you, like the two children in the wood,

> "Thro' many a flowery path and shelly grot,
> Where learning lulled us in her private * maze."

"The very thought, you see, tips my pen with poetry, and brings Eton to my view."†

Injurious, therefore, though the system pursued in Edinburgh may be allowed in many instances to be, I conceive that it is by no means universally injurious; and, on the contrary, that, to minds of a certain conformation, it constitutes one of the peculiar advantages of our metropolitan university. I know that while Dr. Brown was most attentive to the instructions of his teachers, he conceived that he derived the greatest benefit from the license he enjoyed in indulging during so many hours in the bent of his own genius.

We can conceive nothing more delightful than the manner in which this period was spent by Dr. Brown; with such professors as Stewart, Robison, Playfair, and Black, and such friends as

* "This expression prettily distinguishes their studies when out of the public school, which would naturally, at their age, be vague and desultory." Such is the note upon this passage by Mason; with which I am disposed to agree, except in the remark, that their studies would be vague. Their studies would probably be desultory; but there seems to be no reason for supposing that they would be vague.

† Mason's Gray.

Horner, Leyden, Reddie, and Erskine, and the happiness of living in a family that he loved with the greatest warmth of affection. As he was unwilling to go abroad, many of his college acquaintances came and spent their evenings with him in his mother's house. He was always temperate in his habits. His favourite beverage was tea, and over it, hour after hour was spent in discussing with his youthful companions

The wondrous wisdom that a day had won.

There was no subject in literature, or philosophy, that did not engage their attention. It was often morning before they parted; and such was the amicable spirit in which their discussions were carried on, that no one who happened to be present ever recollected the slightest appearance of irritation. In these peaceful and happy hours, Dr. Brown distinguished himself by the boldness of his speculations, the acuteness of his reflections, and the noonday clearness with which he invested every subject that was introduced. Leyden was, at this time, studying for the church; and this led their discussions frequently to topics of theology, in which Dr. Brown ever showed great knowledge and acuteness.

It is delightful to trace in their future life the fondness with which these individuals revert to these their first aspirations after knowledge. With what fidelity, and at the same time with

what poetic beauty, does Dr. Brown exclaim, when addressing himself to Mr. Erskine *—

Even now, when menial throngs, in idle state,
More numerous than thy wishes, round thee wait,
When varying pleasures to the banquet call,
And gemm'd with lustres glows the marble hall,
A sigh will turn to hours more humbly bright,
The simple evenings, gay but with delight;
When, pleased to mingle at each setting sun
The wondrous wisdom which a day had won,
And prouder of some sage's new-learn'd name,
Than he who own'd and rais'd it into fame,
Oft have we seen our midnight taper die,
Nor mark'd nor miss'd it, in our keen reply;
Still by our fading fire the converse sped;
And, wiser than the wisest tome we read,
Doubted, in critic pride, where truth was strong,
Or boldly prov'd even demonstration wrong;
Or for some once fam'd system, now half known,
Some ponderous folly fifty times o'erthrown,
Brought all our logic's war the strife to lead,
And more contended, as we more agreed.

O gentle strifes!—O studious sweet employ!
Calm hours of more than intellectual joy!
Still sure our mutual labours to requite,
And, when they gave not wisdom, gave delight!

In speaking of the volume from which these lines are extracted, Mr. Horner thus expresses himself, in a letter dated 1808. "The passage which has afforded me most pleasure on account of former recollections and enjoyments,

* In the introductory verses to the *Renovation of India*, addressed to William Erskine, Esq. of Bombay.

which it restores with great fidelity and strength, is the description of those evenings of discussion and disputation, when universal empire was in our hands over all things, human and divine."

In the lines to Mr. Reddie, prefixed to the *War Fiend*, Dr. Brown has given another picture of the same period. The subject is, in some measure, new to poetry, and treated with great feeling and delicacy.

> And, O! whate'er my studious toil may trace,
> Well may *thy* name there find a votive place;
> For who shall say, in grave or light design,
> How much of lightest, gravest, has been thine?
> Still memory loves to linger mid the bowers
> That bless'd our youthful academic hours;
> When zeal to zeal the ready impulse spread,
> And Science followed but where Friendship led.
> Then in close heart, when mingling oft our lore,
> We marvell'd much, but question'd, doubted more;—
> In the gay rural walks where, soon or late,
> Still rose some never weary old debate;—
> Mix'd in the flowing theme of truth and mirth,
> Thought sprung from thought, one equal mutual birth;—
> And each, perhaps, with changeful strife untired,
> Has warr'd with fancies which himself inspired.

Among the early friends of Dr. Brown, I must not omit the name of the Rev. Gabriel Scott, late minister of Kirkpatrick-juxta, a man of a very superior mind, who, if his life had been spared, would have distinguished himself in the literary world. With him, and with his excellent

mother,* at that time at a very advanced period of life, Dr. Brown for several years carried on a correspondence, which was only terminated by the death, first of the son and then of the mother. In it there are many passages of considerable interest and value, but several of the most interesting I am obliged to omit, it being impossible to separate them from the local and private matters with which they are connected. The following extracts are inserted, not because they are intrinsically more valuable than much that is passed over, but merely because they are of a less confidential nature. In one of his first letters, dated, 1796, after writing a few lines to Mr. Scott, he thus playfully commences a letter to his mother. In this letter there is an allusion to his first publication, which I shall have occasion to speak of more fully in the next chapter.

"I fear I have been guilty of a breach of good manners in giving precedence to the male, who by the laws of gallantry is doomed to take his station behind, like trainbearers at a coronation, or courteous squires following their liege lady, who ambled along on her milk-white palfrey, elegantly caparisoned, in those happy days, when the age

* Mrs. Scott, widow of the Rev. W. Scott, who preceded his son in the parish of Kirkpatrick. She was a woman of great piety, and of active benevolence. The rich vein of her humour is shown in *Fye let us a' to the Bridal*, and in some other very popular Scotish songs, of which she was the author, but which her great modesty prevented her from acknowledging.

of chivalry was not yet gone. To these happy days I know no greater contrast than the present week. It is the 'heyday' of the races, and the great and little mob are mixing on Leith sands, with the most democratic equality. The dignity and reverence which the ladies of old assumed, our modern belles have entirely laid aside, and during this week, as at Rome during the Saturnalia, are eager to appear in the dress of their *slaves*. 'The cap, the whip, the masculine attire,' &c.

* * * * *

"Shall I tell you my boldness? I have of late been busy in preparing a little work for the press, in answer to Zoonomia, a medico-metaphysical work, published two or three years ago by Dr. Darwin, whose Botanic Garden you must frequently have admired. I read it to some of our Edinburgh philosophers, and have been induced by them to think of passing the awful bourn, so not having the fear of critics before my eyes, I shall print it soon and send you a copy. It is dry and uninteresting, but you must read it as it comes from me.

* * * * *

"Alas! alas! we have not yet arrived at those days in which the sword is to be turned into the ploughshare. Negociation is at an end, and war is again to rage. Heaven shed its mercy on the pillow of the rulers of nations. They are either guilty of the blood of thousands, or if they be

guiltless, they have at least to regret the unavoidable necessity of shedding it. Every hair of our head is numbered, yet man, the image of God, falls at the nod of man *dressed in a little brief authority.*"

To the REV. G. SCOTT.

January 29, 1797.

* * * *

I HOPE Mrs. Scott and you have recovered from all the coughs and cattarrhs of our severe winter. I am but an awkward nurse, or I should have wished to be with you. Our own house too was in some degree a house of sickness, for beside the little flying maladies, which just alight and take wing again, my mother was for several weeks confined with a general weakness, and rheumatism. She is now, however, a great deal better, and I hope will soon be able to escape from the bastille of her own four walls.

Do you think that we may venture to hope any thing from our embassy to Lisle? I am quite wearied out with this long secrecy, and if our sisters have not been slandered, feel inclined to wish that Lady Malmesbury had been sent instead of her Lord, that we might have known a little how things were going on.

Of literary news there is none. You will perhaps have heard of the universal character, the

pasigraphy invented by one of the Parisian men of letters. We as yet know it only as a fact, as he has announced his invention but has not yet published its principles. Our own countryman, Mr. Wat of Birmingham, has been employed for some time on the same object. Leibnitz and Bishop Wilkins preceded them, and I fear the present attempts will die abortive like theirs. I have always thought that the difficulty of inventing a new language more than counterbalances its utility. We may be deceived by the signs of which we make use, but the inventors of the language have been equally deceived, and the faults of the old system of words will thus be transfused into the new. Besides, the new language must be taught. This can only be done through the medium of the old. The new character will not, therefore, be associated immediately with the idea, but with the corresponding old character, and will, therefore, be subject to all its imperfections. Why do we not adopt an existing language, ancient or modern, and render it universal? The knowledge of the pasigraphy of the French will be confined to as small a number as those who read Latin, and to a much smaller than those who read French: Either of these languages will serve. But we should not pass sentence till the criminal is in court. The invention may perhaps be important, and if it tend to accelerate the diffusion of knowledge, it must be for the happiness of man.

All here join in kind remembrance to Mrs. Scott and you. Yours faithfully.

To Mrs. Scott.

April 3, 1797.

I have just been calling on our friend Mrs. Murdoch, who informs me that she had heard from you lately, and that you had remembered me very kindly in your letter. O that I were at K. to thank you. But as fate has erected so many milestones between us, I must just do as other great men do—return you thanks by proxy. The postman shall be my ambassador, and "these presents" his credentials.

I was sorry to hear that you have had so much sickness among you, but was happy to find—how happiness and sorrow do tread on each others heels!—that your invalids were recovering. Nothing will cure you completely but change of air; and though the atmosphere of Edinburgh be not the purest, it will be the more a change. We are not yet fitted to dwell for ever in the Elysian fields. The pure oxygen of the country, grave doctors inform us, induces consumption and a variety of ills; and though in this case I own, as in every other, doctors disagree, if their arguments be equal, you must fling the desire of seeing your friends here into one scale, and Dr. Beddoes will weigh down his opponent.

Have the drum and fife yet scared your Dryades? Every thing here is martial. The trade of death is blended with every other trade—Haberdasher, Warrior, & Co. There is surely a quantity of valour latent about us, that starts up where it would little be expected. The most combustible body needs a spark to inflame it. "Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed," do not lie buried in the churchyard alone. They may be found buried alive in the cemetery of a shop, handling not the rod of empire, but a yard or a cap. How many of the great actors on the scene might only have been mutes!

> Great Julius, on the mountains bred,
> A flock, perhaps, or herd had fed.
> He who the world subdued had been
> But the best wrestler on the green.

I often amuse myself with thinking what effect the change of one slight circumstance would have had, not merely on the individual, but on the general state of the world. Had the gypsies who carried away Adam Smith been an hour earlier, the Wealth of Nations would never have been written, and political economists would still have erred. It is happy for us that circumstances are at the disposal of a wiser Being than ourselves. Marlboroughs indeed sleep in our shops, but it is only because there is no occasion for them to be awake and disturb the peace of the world. If I

am tempted to regret that circumstances were as they have been, it is chiefly because I have made a very bad use of them. * * *

The following extracts are from a letter to Mr. Scott in 1798.

* * * * *

"You ask when Burns's posthumous works are to appear. I have not heard of them of late. I merely know, that with his life they are to be two volumes quarto, but I believe they are not to be out this year, as Dr. Currie's arrangements prevent him from having the life ready so soon as the admirers of Burns would wish.

"The fate of the gallant and injured Swiss I am sure has excited your compassion. No, it is not compassion, for that is almost absorbed in indignation at the wretches who have dared to disturb their peace. And they call, forsooth, on the spirit of William Tell, and say that they have come to free his oppressed descendants. I could almost wish for an arm of more than human force, to crush the hypocrites. For the Italian states I felt less; because their profligacy almost deserved what they suffered. But the Swiss I have always venerated. They are in the happy medium of barbarity and civilization, which has the advantages of society, without its multitude of evils; and the romantic wildness of their patriotism inspires a

sublime feeling, similar to that which their own mountains would excite. Now, however, they must be mixed with the very dregs of humanity, and their enthusiastic attachment to their country will cease, when it can no longer afford them independence. But I will hope better things.

* * * * *

"OUR newspapers do not seem to be written in very bright characters at present. Poor Ireland! It is no very sound limb to be added to our body national, and, which is worse, unsound as it is, it has no disposition to coalesce. The orange and the green are alike against us; and our cry of union has served only to raise an union of opposition. Of all the saints in the calendar, St. Patrick is the most careless of his trust, or the least able to promote happiness. Instead of averting war, he contents himself with keeping away toads and rats, like a virtuoso who spends his whole time and fortune on insects, while his house is going to wreck. I shall never forgive our government for having suffered a nation to be miserable, by allowing it to be ignorant.

"I fear we must long have hordes of savages in our immediate neighbourhood, and under the same sovereign."

* * * * *

The following letter, upon the death of Mr. Scott, will be read with much interest by those

who have perused the admirable verses upon that event, entitled *Holy Age.** *

To Mrs. Scott.

Never did I think, my excellent friend, that I should find it painful to write to you. From our first acquaintance, I looked forward, if not to the pleasanter intermingling of frequent conversation, at least, to a long and happy correspondence with the mother and son. But I saw dimly through futurity; and I have now to console, where I thought only of wishing a long continuance of that placid happiness which is felt in the union of virtue and intellect, and the exercise of the filial and maternal charities.

About six weeks ago I received a letter from Mr. Scott, mentioning his having recovered from a severe indisposition. As we have no sympathies which tell us of the dangers of distant friends, I trusted to his recovery, and omitted those inquiries which I should otherwise have been eager to make; especially, as I had dispatched a letter to you immediately before receiving his. I was wholly unprepared for the event, which the corner of a newspaper communicated; and you, who were even better acquainted with the value of him whom we have lost, will know how painful the intimation was.

* Poetical Works, iv. 53.

I cannot attempt to be a comforter. I am at any time unfit, but more so now; and I remember whom I am addressing. There is no mind so abstracted from this world by religion or philosophy, or so buried within itself by narrow views of good, as not to rest a considerable share of its happiness on the frail breathing of another. But the remedy has been wisely proportioned to the wound; and the mind which has been harmonized to feel most acutely—the large, the social, the religious mind—is mercifully provided with the noblest means of consolation.

May I request you to favour me with the particulars of your son's illness. Above all, let me know how your own health has stood the shock. And believe me, with sincere regard,

Yours always.

CHAPTER II.

OBSERVATIONS ON DARWIN'S ZOONOMIA.

WHILE Dr. Brown was pursuing his studies at the University of Edinburgh, the Theory of the learned Dr. Darwin * excited a degree of interest in the literary world, disproportioned to its scientific merits, and which is to be ascribed partly to its novelty, and partly to the splendour of the attainments of its author. In reading Zoonomia, Dr. Brown, as was his custom, marked on the margin such passages as he conceived to be worthy of notice. He then committed a few observations to paper, with the intention of communicating them to some periodical publication. But his matter increasing, he found that he could not do justice to the subject in less than a separate volume.

It has been supposed that he undertook this work by the advice of Dr. Gregory and Mr.

* See Note D.

Stewart; but this was not the case as sufficiently appears from his correspondence; and if any farther proof were necessary, I am able to state, upon his own authority, that he followed the impulse of his own mind alone. By the advice of Mr. Stewart, however, he resolved, before putting is manuscript to the press, to submit it to the perusal of Dr. Darwin. Of the correspondence that, in consequence, ensued, the letters of Dr. Brown are worthy of being preserved, not merely on account of the light they are calculated to throw upon some parts of his work, but also as containing a record of the progress which, at that early period, he had made in the science of mind. They also evince a degree of ingenuousness and dignity of mind, highly honourable. As the letters of Dr. Darwin were not intended for publication, I shall insert only such extracts as are necessary to make the letters of his youthful correspondent in any degree intelligible, and as cannot in any degree be injurious to the fame of their ingenious author. Dr. Brown's first letter is dated some months before he was nineteen years of age, and his Observations therefore must have been begun when he was little more than eighteen. Both the letters and the book have a value altogether independent of the author's age, but that circumstance should not be forgotten in forming an estimate of Dr. Brown's character.

To Dr. Darwin.

St. Patrick Square, Edinburgh,
October 24, 1796.

Sir,—In acknowledging the delight which I received from the perusal of Zoonomia, I only agree with the public voice. I am, however, surprised, that while every one has been delighted, no one as yet has answered, for I am convinced that the controversies of most authors take their rise from that state of mind. The transition is natural from passive admiration, to a strict examination of the theory we admire; and errors are perhaps detected which would have escaped amidst the indifference excited by a common work. Such, at least, was my mental history on reading the first volume of Zoonomia. I was delighted with the originality of thought it displayed. It was such as I expected from the author of the Botanic Garden. But the reasoning appeared to me in some passages more specious than solid, and the leading principles seemed often to involve inconsistencies. I therefore, for my own amusement, marked down my observations occasionally as I went along; yet, even in noting an error, I always found reason to admire the ingenuity of the very error I condemned. On concluding the work, I found that

my remarks had greatly swelled upon my hands. I afterwards methodised them, and have since been induced to think of committing them to the press.

It would, however, distress me much if I should afterwards find that I had given to the world an unfair statement of your opinions. I will therefore, with your permission, send you a copy of the manuscript, in the hope of having such mistatements, if any there be, corrected.

My name is unknown to you, and unknown, indeed, in general, to the literary world. It is not, however, the combat of names, but of arguments, that Truth regards.

There is, unfortunately, no direct communication between Derby and this place. But if you signify your approbation, I will commit the packet to the care of a gentleman who intends leaving this place in about a week, and is to pass through Derby in his way to London. He proposes visiting some other parts of England; but you will receive it, at farthest, in the course of a few weeks.

You will have the goodness to let me know immediately whether it be agreeable to you to take the trouble of reading the manuscript; and if so, to inform me as soon as you conveniently can after receiving it, whether there be any statement in it unauthorised by your own expressions,

that I may correct the passage before I send it to the press.

I am, SIR, with the greatest respect,
Your humble servant,
THOMAS BROWN.

From DR. DARWIN.

SIR,—I AM favoured with your letter, and shall be glad to read your manuscript, if it be not very voluminous, and if it be transcribed in a hand easily legible. I well know the power of oratory, and that a man may say many things ingeniously on both sides of almost any question. But in philosophical works my desire is to investigate the truth; and I shall be ready to acknowledge any errors I may have fallen into, or to correct any inaccuracies of language which may have occurred in a work which is in part metaphysical, and therefore ought to be accurate.

I am, SIR, your obedient servant,
E. DARWIN.

Derby, October 27, 1796.

To DR. DARWIN.

Edinburgh, November 27, 1796.

DEAR SIR,—I AM extremely sorry that, after having placed you in that disagreeable state of suspense which the unexpected attack of a stran-

ger must, in some degree occasion, the transmission of the manuscript should have been so long unavoidably delayed. The gentleman who was to take the charge of delivering it has deferred, from day to day, his intended departure; and as he has at length changed his mind, and resolved to remain a month or two longer at Edinburgh, I have taken the liberty of sending the little parcel by the Carlisle diligence, the mail from which place, I believe, passes through Derby; so that it will reach you as soon as this letter. If there be any expression in the manuscript which you consider as in the slightest degree disrespectful, I shall be extremely happy to correct it, if it can possibly be done without destroying the effect of the objection. There are some terms,—absurdity, &c.—for which I in vain endeavoured to find a gentler substitute, as our language was unfortunately invented before the art of literary war had attained its present state of refinement, when the object of the controversialist was not so much to defend the cause of Truth as to gain the comparative glory of being the less bespattered in the dirty combat. Such unavoidable harshnesses—I know not whether our rhetoricians have given them a softer Greek name, and ranked them among their tropes—I trust your candour will forgive.

I know too well the importance and extent of your professional duties to expect to hear from

you so soon as I should otherwise have wished to send the manuscript to the press. Your remarks will, of course, be limited to the premises from which my reasonings are drawn, to the fair or unfair manner in which I have stated your own opinions. I am conscious that any such misstatement has been unintentional, and I shall therefore be very willing and happy to correct it.

I am, dear SIR, yours respectfully,

T. BROWN.

Soon after the date of this letter the manuscript must have reached Dr. Darwin, as appears from his letter of date December 2d, of the same year. As his letter could not have been designed for publication, I do not feel myself justified in inserting it. The answer of Dr. Brown must not be suppressed.

TO DR. DARWIN.

December 5, 1796.

SIR,—I THIS morning received your letter. Its asperity I might possibly have retorted had I been in the slightest degree irritated by it; but it was too profuse to excite any other emotion than that of surprise; and the angry feelings I have never cultivated, as I do not think they add much to the dignity of our nature.

It was not with the view of obtaining your

approbation that I wrote the observations on *Zoonomia*. In submitting them to your perusal, I paid the respect which I believed to be due to your literary fame and abilities; but it was to the decision of a much higher tribunal that I looked up. As one of the public, and I acknowledge as one of the most eminent, I may indeed regret that my remarks have not appeared to you conclusive; but an individual, however eminent, may be prejudiced and mistaken, and the judgment of a part is not necessarily the judgment of the whole.

* * * * *

From the contemptible light in which you view the manuscript, it can no longer be interesting to you. I shall therefore expect to receive it by the first conveyance.

I am,

SIR,

Yours,

From Dr. Darwin.

Derby, December 20, 1796.

* * * * *

* * * I shall mention those of your observations which I can recollect. You doubt that ideas can exist without being attended with pleasure or pain; and therefore assert, that an idea cannot exist without *sensation.* I suppose you here use the word *sensation* in Mr. Locke's mode of using it; which has raised a difficulty in your mind, since the figures of the letters which compose words, as we read a book, give us neither pleasure nor pain, and yet they introduce into our minds the sense of those words; and therefore exist, though they are not attended with the *sensation* of pleasure or pain. The great Malbranche saw this analysis of an idea, but no other metaphysician. *Zoonomia,* sect. vii. 3. 2. In sect. iii. 6. 4. it is said, " I ask by what organ of sense you first become acquainted with certain ideas, as of wisdom or benevolence?" This subject has been explained by Berkeley and Hume; who have shown, that what were believed by Mr. Locke to be general ideas, are all particular ones. Some of these I have given account of in sect. xv. 1. 5. Yet you think, from this question (which was to save repeating what others had said on this subject) that I acknowledged the ap-

plication to be impossible; and that you exult in saying, that if it would not apply to the whole it could not be a true theory! Something you have said about *black* when you spoke of ocular spectra, I do not accurately remember; but I think you seemed to hold, that *black* was a colour, and consequently a stimulus; as the unwise favourers of Dr. Cullen's theory have said that cold was a stimulus.

* * * * *

* * * You would write English well if you would lay aside the nonsense of metaphor. Metaphors, in a philosophical argumentative treatise, are a disgrace, as they consist of unimportant analogies, whereas philosophical argumentation consists of important analogies. * * *

E. DARWIN."

To DR. DARWIN.

"*December* 28, 1796.

"SIR,—I was favoured with your letter, and return you my acknowledgments for the advice it contained. I am myself conscious that there was a superabundance of metaphor in the papers I sent you. But I have always found it best not to chill the ardour of composition by pausing to correct, but to wait till the whole be finished, and then to prune whatever is luxuriant. The copy you received was the first I took. All I wished

was to know, whether I had stated your opinions justly; and the mere ornaments of style, as a matter of less consequence, I deferred correcting till I should prepare a copy for the press.

You accuse me of descending to personalities, but you must be conscious that personalities are of two kinds—those which relate to an author as an author, and those which relate to him as a man. The former are not surely reprehensible. They are implied in every answer; for to attempt to confute an opinion, is to assert that the author of that opinion is wrong. Of the latter, I was not, and could not, possibly be guilty, for I have always considered the admission of them into any work as in the highest degree disgraceful; and the opinion I had drawn from your writings was such, that if I had been personal, it must have been in your praise.

* * * * *

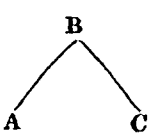
It would be impossible for me to undertake the work you advise, even were I willing to do it, as my time is almost wholly engrossed by professional studies. But I am still a sceptic as to your theory; and unless I were fully convinced of its truth, I could not think of explaining on its principles the phenomena of mind. You consider it as founded on the solid basis of truth and nature, and if my opinion wavered with authorities, yours would, I confess, have great weight; but though the theory were just, I should be guilty

of an attempt to deceive the world, if I were to profess a belief to which my conscience could not assent. Besides, I have myself formed a theory of mind, simpler in my opinion, and more satisfactory, which I shall perhaps at some time submit to the world.

The objections you remembered were not such as most materially affected your theory. You will, however, allow me to say a few words in their defence. First, as to the existence of ideas without sensation. When the stimulus is the same, and the sensorial power the same, the effect will be the same. The odorous particles of a rose you say at one time excite sensation, at another an irritative idea. The stimulus is in both cases the same, and in both cases the idea must be sensitive, unless in the latter case the sensorial power be different. But the sensorial power was the same, because with the same stimulus it produced the same fibrous contraction. The stimulus is the same, the sensorial power the same, and the fibrous contraction the same; the effect of the whole must, therefore, be the same, that is to say, the idea must in both cases be sensitive. The sensation, however, which I believe to be essential to an idea, does not necessarily imply the existence of pleasure or pain: these are only more violent sensations. I do not receive either from the view of the paper now before me; yet it does not produce an irritative

idea. I am sensible of its existence, I attend to it as much as I do to the smell of a rose, which you allow to be sensitive. The same is the case in most of the objects of sight.

Irritative ideas you believe to produce other animal motions by association; but, as I have stated in my Observations, when a fibre A acts by association with another remote fibre C, the central parts B are the link of connection, and, therefore, there must be a complete sensation and volition, according to your definitions, in the direction AB, BC.



With respect to our ideas of judgment, wisdom, memory, &c., you seem to have confounded general with reflex ideas. I will admit, that all our general ideas are particular,—that it is impossible to conceive a triangle which is not acute right-angled, nor obtuse, but at once all and neither. My idea of memory, however, is itself a particular idea; and if ideas be fibrous motions, my idea of memory must be the contraction of certain fibres. I therefore ask what those fibres are. Let us suppose a person born with the sense of hearing only; let a bell vibrate in his neighbourhood; and after a certain interval let it vibrate a second time. The contraction of the fibres is in this case the same; yet he will not have the same idea *alone*. He will be conscious of a previous similar sensation, that is to say, of memory;

nor can this be resolved into association, for association cannot take place between a contracted fibre and itself: it may take place between A and B, but not between A and A. Nor will he be conscious of a previous similar sensation alone. He will also receive from the second vibration the ideas of time and of number. Here then are different ideas with the same contraction.

I did not advance that black was a colour. I only stated, that when we look at a black object the fibres of the retina must be in a certain position; because, in any other position, they convey the idea of colour. When they remain long in this position in the dark, they must be fatigued, and throw themselves into a contrary direction, in the same manner as we become restless and fatigued when our limbs have been long extended in one posture on a sopha. I might with equal justice infer from the section on Ocular spectra, that you consider black as a colour. You tell us that after gazing long on a black object, and afterwards shutting the eyelids, a luminous spectrum is observed; and as you do not attribute the formation of spectra to the action of remaining light, but to the fatigue of the fibres, the same effect must surely be produced by absolute privation of stimulus in the case of darkness, as by the less general privation of stimulus when we look at a black object. Accordingly, after remaining long in the dark, we should have the sensation of light.

In various parts of your letter you seem to hint that truth is not my object in publishing my Observations. It is not emolument, for I believe I shall give the copy to a bookseller; nor do I suppose that I am more influenced by the desire of fame than any other writer. By any sentiments of ill-will to your character, I certainly was not actuated: for I had formed for it those sentiments of admiration and esteem which I always conceive for those by whom I have been delighted and instructed. I submit my remarks to the public, not that your theory may be acknowledged to be false, but that it may be carefully examined, and rejected or received according to its merits; and I shall be happy if the confutation of my own errors lead me to the discovery and acknowledgment of truth.

I am,

Sir,

Yours,

T. BROWN.

From DR. DARWIN.

* * * * *

* * In my second volume, at the end, in a supplemental page, which, perhaps in the

Irish octavo edition may be left out, (as some are (I see) in the first volume,) I have observed how difficult it is to *think without words*, and still more so, when the words in use have two meanings. This I applied to a person who wrote to me that the motions of epileptic fits were not voluntary motions, (as I had asserted,) because they were involuntary. Now, I think you and I use the word sensation in totally different meanings; I will therefore repeat what I mean, without the word sensation at all, and will use pleasure and pain instead. Thus, animal motions, (viz. of fibres, of muscles, or of the ends of nerves in the organs of sense,) are succeeded by stimulus, or by pleasure or pain, or by desire or aversion, or by association, and are all also occasionally succeeded by one of them. Now the motion of the retina, or an idea from sight, may be preceded by stimulus of light, and may be succeeded either by pleasure or pain, or by a volition, or by association; and other motions may be produced in consequence of these sensorial powers, but none of them are a necessary part of the idea, or motion of the retina, caused by the stimulus of light, producing irritation and consequent fibrous motion.

In motion produced by the sensorial power of association and of volition, the *whole* of the sensorium (though a part, the central parts of it, must) may not be affected; because the whole

nervous system is an extensive thing, and some branches of nerves may communicate their motions to one part of the sensorium, and other fibres may by association or volition be excited into action by other branches of the sensorium, without affecting the whole of it.

Hence pleasure or pain may ascend from a part of the extremity to a part of the centre of the sensorium, and desire or aversion at the same time, in other branches of the nerves, may pass from another part of the centre to another part of the extremity; but, when almost the whole of the sensorial power, which can be spared from the vital motions, is passing one way, (as in great anger, which is excess of volition,) little or none passes at the same time the contrary way, as angry people in general fighting do not feel the wounds they receive. These I expressed by saying, when volition acted *strongly*, pleasure or pain was not felt, as the movements were in contrary direction. In your paper you seem to think this assertion quite general, and were, I recollect, jocular about it. I believe you left out the word *strongly*.

You ask how reflex ideas are produced? Certainly like general ideas. Ideas are motions of the extremity of some nerve of sense; a general idea is a partial renovation of one of these movements. A reflex idea is also a partial renovation of these movements, and are not exactly the same

every time we use the same word, as is evidently the inaccuracy of the word memory, which means either recollection or suggestion.

In the dark, people often see colours, indeed mostly, as when one lies an hour awake; but if muscles are not in action, and not extended by antagonist muscles, they require no counter extension.

What you say about a bell, is treated of in the section on repetition; and of number and time in fifteenth section.

If you think it worth your while to send me a very short outline of your theory of the mind, I will give you a candid opinion of it, or of any other questions which you ask for information only. My second volume has brought me many patients from even London, and distant parts of England, and very many consultation letters from both the faculty, and from others, so that I believe my work meets with daily new readers.

* * * *

You do not say what your professional studies are, whether Law, Physic, or Divinity, so that I do not yet know how to direct my letter. You say the stimulus is the same, and the sensorial power the same, &c. You forget that the *quantity* of stimulus and the *quantity* of sensorial power is perpetually varying, and hence the fibrous motions may be succeeded by pleasure or

pain, or by volition, or by association, or by none of them. Adieu.

From your real friend,

E. DARWIN.

The following lines are written upon the envelope.

January 12, 1797.

I WROTE the inclosed at a public house when I was much fatigued, and I fear you will not be able to decypher it. Your syllogism amused me much, where you say "the stimulus is the same, and the sensorial power the same; the effect of the whole must be the same." Now the stimulus constantly varies in quantity, as the odour of a rose by every breeze; the sensorial power is never the same in quantity, as that depends on the previous accumulation or expenditure. Hence the fibrous motions are sometimes so great as to be attended with pain or pleasure, at other times not so great.

You talk of sensation not to be perceived; that is, which is not attended with pleasure or pain, so that you do not use the word in the same meaning as I do, or as Mr. Locke does.

I do not recollect any other of your objections, but I thought them all easily answered.

* * * *

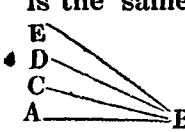
To Dr. Darwin.

January 21, 1797.

"Sir,—I am sorry that our mutual objections should still fail to produce conviction. There is a delusion in intellectual optics, by which our own arguments are magnified, while those of our antagonist are diminished and confused, and mine may perhaps appear to me of consequence merely as being mine. It is a natural fondness, and I trust, therefore, you will forgive me, if I seem obstinately tenacious of opinion. You may be assured that it is not because I am unwilling to acknowledge the truth to be against me, but because, if it be against me, I do not perceive it.

It is of little, or, indeed, of no consequence, whether sensation be a necessary part of the idea, or merely a consequence of it. In whichever of these meanings the term sensitive idea be understood, it will be equally evident that those ideas which you denominate irritative must be sensitive. The syllogism which you say amused you much would not have appeared ridiculous, had you attended to the separate steps: I shall therefore state these more fully. I did not *assume gratuitously,* that the stimulus and sensorial power were the same. Indeed, one of my strongest objections to your theory of fibrous motions, as constituting ideas, is drawn from the fact, that

the sensorial power is perpetually varying in quantity, and that the stimulus continuing the same, the effect produced is the same, when the sensorial power is less, as when it was greater, contrary to the laws of fibrous contraction. Thus the same meadow appears green to a thousand persons at once, and to the same persons at different hours. But to return to the syllogism; I do indeed take for granted that the stimulus is the same in the case of irritative and sensitive ideas, as the stimulus of the rays of light from a tree in walking through a grove. I do not, however, *take for granted,* that the sensorial power is the same. This is susceptible of proof. Let



ABC, ABD, ABE, be angles of different degrees. Let ABC denote the fibrous contraction constituting green, ABD blue, ABE red. You establish it as a general law, that the fibrous contraction is as the stimulus and sensorial power, so that any two being given, the third may be inferred. The stimulus in the case of the tree is the same; the fibrous contraction the same ABC; for if it were different, as ABD for instance, it would no longer be the irritative idea of a tree, but of the sky; if ABE, of a rose. The stimulus and contraction, therefore, being the same, the sensorial power must necessarily have been the same. Accordingly, I think that there is nothing ridiculous in stating, that as the stimulus is the

same, the sensorial power the same, and the fibrous contraction the same, the general effect must be the same. For if we assert that sensation takes place in one instance and not in the other, we must admit that there is a difference of effect without a difference of preceding circumstances. You mention in Zoonomia that other fibrous motions may be associated with irritative ideas, and in your letter you took no notice of the argument I drew from it, that in that case there must, according to your own definitions, be a complete sensation and volition.

In my Observations on Zoonomia, I carefully avoided giving any opinion of my own. I contented myself with taking your principles as you had yourself defined them, and endeavouring to prove that they were not justified by the phenomena, and were sometimes inconsistent. My own opinion of sensation, which I stated in my last letter as not necessarily implying pleasure or pain, is therefore of no consequence as to my objections to yours. I was led to form it by reflecting, that though philosophers have imagined a distinction between sensation and perception, there is no foundation in Nature for this division. Sensation I define to be the knowledge of any quality of external bodies, acquired by impression on our organs of sense, and this sensation and perception of the schools are both reducible to this. But all qualities of external bodies are not

necessarily pleasant or painful. I may therefore be sensible of external objects, without being sensible of pleasure or pain; or, in other words, sensation does not necessarily imply the existence of pleasure or pain. To explain the phenomena of mind in consistence with your own principles, you must yourself adopt this statement of sensation. Consciousness is not a deceiver, and I am certainly conscious of neither pleasure nor pain from the sight of the paper now before me. I am, however, sensible of its whiteness, of its extension, and of all its other qualities. Here then —and the case is undoubtedly not rare, for it is the same with almost the whole of the objects of sight—here is a knowledge of qualities without pleasure or pain. Where shall we class this knowledge? It certainly is not to be ascribed to irritation, for irritative ideas exclude the knowledge of external qualities, nor to volition, nor to association; and it can be ascribed to sensation only, if we define it to be the knowledge of the qualities of external bodies, and not merely pleasure or pain.

I did not perfectly understand, in your last letter, whether you conceive the whole of the central parts to be affected in sensation and volition, or merely a part. But in the definitions in Zoonomia, it is evidently implied that the whole of the central parts, if not the whole of the sensorium, must necessarily be affected; and in

either case, it is equally evident, that two sensations or two volitions, or a sensation and volition, cannot occupy the same part at the same time. In my paper I did not omit the word "strongly," but endeavoured to prove that it was as impossible for a weak as for a strong sensation and volition to co-exist.

That reflex ideas are partial renovations of former fibrous motions, I cannot admit. There may be different contractions, but there cannot be a half or a third of a contraction. The reflex idea can differ from the original fibrous motion only in two ways; either in the degree of contraction, or in the quantity of fibres contracted. The first, indeed, is impossible, for you lay it down as a law, that there cannot be any new fibrous contraction, which has not gone through the stage of irritation. Besides, it would then be a totally new idea, and not a partial renovation of an old one. The sensation of blue is not said to be a partial renovation of the idea of red. There only remains, therefore, the second mode, a difference in the quantity of fibres contracted. Each idea is, in fact, composed of a number of co-existing fibrous contractions or ideas. The contraction which constitutes the idea of memory must therefore have been one of the number; and, accordingly, the first motion of the organ of sense must have been attended with a belief in a previous similar sensation. There is sufficient

reason for the division of ideas into those of sight, of hearing, of touch, &c. each class being distinct from the others, so that a sound cannot excite in the sensorium an idea of colour, nor a colour an idea of sound. The idea of memory is a fibrous contraction of a certain organ; if of the organ of sight, it must be unknown to the blind, if of hearing, to the deaf, &c. Many more objections might be adduced to the doctrine of reflex ideas being parts of previous ideas, but these I must omit, as my paper is exhausted.

I have not yet completely systematised the theory of mind at which I hinted, or I should be extremely happy to be favoured with your opinion of it. I was obliged to leave it in a rude state, to attend to professional studies, (the study of law,) but it will be an agreeable variety during the summer vacation, and I hope I shall then be able to complete it.

It gave me pleasure to hear of the general approbation which your work had met with, for I *admire*, though I do not *agree*, and I am happy to find that the world is alive to works of genius. An apathy in this respect I dread more than the influence of any theory which is founded on principles not absolutely just, even when defended with all that ingenuity which distinguishes yours. I am, Sir,

With great respect,

Yours very truly,

T. Brown.

No answer seems to have been returned to this masterly letter, and here the correspondence terminated. The transmission of the manuscript occasioned a considerable delay in the publication, which did not take place till the beginning of 1798.

The work was noticed soon after its publication, in the Monthly Review which at that time occupied the principal place in our periodical literature, in a very excellent article by Dr. Duncan, senior, published in the Annals of Medicine, and in many other periodical works. In none of these was it considered as a juvenile performance, but as the answer of a philosopher to a philosopher, and in this light it received encomiums that might have satisfied the ambition of a veteran in literary warfare.

From those acquainted with his youth, Dr. Brown received approbation still more ample and gratifying. Lord Woodhouselee and Mr. M'Kenzie, with neither of whom at that time he was personally acquainted, spoke of the preface as the most philosophical and elegant production that had been published for many years. Dr. Gregory, Mr. Stewart, and his other distinguished friends in Edinburgh, honoured the work with the most unqualified approbation.

He received many congratulatory letters upon the occasion. Of these none could be more gra-

tifying to him than the following, which I have great pleasure in inserting.

From Dr. Currie.

Liverpool, July 6, 1798.

Dear Sir,—I received your Observations yesterday, and the letter that informed me you had directed that they should be sent to me arrived in due course of post. Accept of my best thanks for a proof of your remembrance so very pleasing, and for a specimen of talents so very respectable. I have read your preface attentively, and I have looked into several parts of the body of the work at hazard. I expected to find, but have been as yet disappointed, some indications of the author's age. I have as yet perceived nothing juvenile either in the style or sentiment. I see a profound work on a profound subject, the language correct, the expression temperate, and the observations acute and penetrating. The writer seems, so far as I have observed, equal to the subject. What more could well be said?

I intend to peruse your book regularly, and with the pen in my hand. If I notice any thing that may deserve your attention, I will mark the place on the margin. I dare say I shall have objections to offer, though none perhaps very important; but I know by experience, that when a

man has bent his mind long and attentively to one subject, it is very interesting to receive the observations of a friendly and candid mind on the result of his reflections, though these observations may have little importance in themselves, and may be thrown out with little reflection.

It will perhaps amuse you to be informed, that I reviewed Darwin myself in the English Review, (now dropt,) each volume occupying four numbers. If you have an opportunity of getting a perusal of these obsolete Reviews at Edinburgh, pray look over my articles. You will find them in 1794 and 1796. They are most incorrectly printed, but no matter.

My observations frequently coincided with Darwin's; but I then rejected, and I now reject his foundations, as indeed I have expressed in my "Medical Reports," of the second edition of which (corrected and enlarged) I will send you a copy, if you will tell me how I can transmit it safely.

What are you doing at Edinburgh? Pray let me have some account of your present occupation, and of your future views. I wish you would come to Liverpool and spend a little time among us. We all think of you with much regard. I am particularly desired by Mrs. Currie to offer her kind remembrance.

Adieu, my dear Sir! You have begun early a career that I hope will be brilliant. Assure

yourself of my best wishes, and of my sincere regard. In haste.

I am always, &c.

J. CURRIE.

When we consider that the greater part of this work was written before Dr. Brown was nineteen, and that it was published before he had attained his twentieth year, it may perhaps be regarded as the most remarkable, and in some respects, the most valuable of his productions; and I know not if, in the history of philosophy, there is to be found any work exhibiting an equal prematurity of talents and attainments. In a controversial point of view, its interest is greatly diminished, from the lower estimation in which the theory of his opponent is now generally held. It has, however, a value independent of its exposition of particular errors, and contains many philosophical views of great general merit and importance.

Those also who delight to trace the progress of intellect, will find in it the germ of all Dr. Brown's subsequent discoveries in regard to mind, and of those principles of philosophising by which he was guided in his future speculations. The substance of a philosopher's writings is often to be found in his first work. This arises in part from the tendency common to philosophers with other writers, to embrace the earliest opportunity

of pouring forth the stores of their past acquirement—and still more from the peculiarity of intellect that leads them in studying any question, to trace it to its first principles. In their future works, accordingly, we often find little more than an evolution of these principles in new applications of them; and in many instances, even the application is not altogether new, but rather the fuller explication of what before was hinted at. Numerous illustrations of this remark will occur to those who are acquainted with the history of philosophy.

The examination of the theory of Darwin carried with it an advantage to Dr. Brown far beyond the fame he acquired by his work. In unfolding the errors of his antagonist, he discovered also those false principles of philosophising in which they had their origin, and arrived at more correct views respecting the object of physical inquiry, and the relation of cause and effect; his inquiries also led him into an examination of the doctrines that had been maintained upon the subject of abstraction, and brought him to those conclusions which we shall afterwards have an opportunity of considering, and which may be numbered among the most important of his speculations.

CHAPTER III.

CHOICE OF A PROFESSION

THE young men attending the Edinburgh university have for many years been accustomed to form themselves into literary associations, in which they may be stimulated to greater ardour in the prosecution of their studies, and have an opportunity of improving themselves in the art of public speaking. This practice exists in many universities, but it has been carried to a much greater extent in Edinburgh than elsewhere; a circumstance which is to be ascribed to that system of education already alluded to, which affords to the students but few opportunities of distinguishing themselves in the presence of their teachers, while it leaves to them the greatest latitude in the conduct of their studies, and in the disposal of their time. The number of these associations, and the spirit with which they are in general supported, form an interesting feature in

the habits of our students, and ought to be more regarded in the estimates formed of a Scotish education. That they are liable to abuse, leading, in many instances, to habits of desultory study, and giving a taste for dialectic subtleties rather than for cautious induction, is not to be denied. But in general their effect is different; and, when under proper regulations, they are certainly attended with very great advantages. The talents of the student are called forth in voluntary exertion; he becomes acquainted with the measure of his own powers; learns to depend upon his own efforts; and above all, is inspired with a spirit of free inquiry. Some of the greatest men of whom Scotland can boast have acknowledged their obligations to such institutions; and indeed there are perhaps few who have received their education in Edinburgh, who do not look back to the hours spent in these literary and philosophic societies as among the most improving of their early lives, and who do not feel themselves able to perform their part in the great drama of life with greater ease and success in consequence of this early *rehearsal.*

Dr. Brown, while pursuing his studies in Scotland, was a member of two of these societies; and I have dwelt the longer upon the subject, because he always considered the benefit which he thus received as very great, and looked back

to this connexion with the most lively interest. It was before the publication of his "Observations," and I believe in 1796, that he was introduced into the Literary Society, which had been instituted a few years previous to that period. Here he met with minds congenial to his own, young men of the most splendid talents, eager like himself in the pursuit of that knowledge, by which many of them have since conferred such honour upon their country.

In such associations, it is usual for the members in succession to read a paper upon some literary or scientific subject; and a question is generally discussed from the debateable grounds of Ethics, Politics, or Theology. On these occasions it is necessary that both sides should find supporters, and it may be easily conceived, that there are always young men ready to show their talents in defending an untenable position. Dr. Brown often thus distinguished himself by his ingenuity as the advocate of error. And though in his printed works, no philosopher has shown more respect for the great principles of theism, his enemies ungenerously availed themselves of these displays of his subtlety, to mar his advancement in life.

The practice, of which such an unworthy advantage was attempted to be taken, was in his case, I am convinced, attended with very material

advantages. In making himself thoroughly acquainted with the arguments of scepticism in a multitude of subjects, he was put upon the way of discovering the only satisfactory answer to them in the original and universal principles of human belief. The beneficial effects of this circumstance are conspicuous in his writings. The great defect in the defenders of established opinions is, that in general, though they bring forward conclusive arguments in favour of their tenets, yet by not having allowed themselves to enter fully into the views of their opponents, they fail in bringing forward answers that apply to their objections, and thus a difficulty is still left unremoved in the mind of the reader. But Dr. Brown having been led to examine, with the interest of an advocate, all the supports of an erroneous cause, in discovering their strength discovered their weakness also, and thus in every discussion in his philosophical works he has taken up the sceptic on his own grounds. The long agitated questions as to personal identity, the reality of moral distinctions, the origin of our moral sentiments, he is allowed even by those who do not enter into his general views to have discussed, in a manner peculiarly satisfactorily, from the dexterity with which he unravels the web of his opponents' sophistries; and I find from his papers, and heads of speeches, that in the societies of which he was a member, he had support-

ed the very opinions which in his printed works he has thus been enabled so dexterously to refute. That his mind would have gone through a similar process, without the benefit of such training, may perhaps be conceded. But there can be little doubt that the practice in which, with a sportful vanity of acuteness, he allowed himself to indulge, improved in no small degree his quickness of discernment.

I would be far, however, from recommending the practice in all cases, from its beneficial effects in a mind singularly constituted. Indeed, in every instance where the love of truth is not paramount it may be considered as dangerous, not, however, because it can ever be unsafe to examine the foundations of our belief. "To conceive," as Dr. Brown himself has admirably remarked, "that inquiry must lead to scepticism, is itself a species of scepticism as to the power and evidence of the principles to which we have given our assent, more degrading, because more irrational, than that open and inconsistent scepticism which it dreads." * But where there is a continual endeavour after the detection of fallacies, both our vanity and indolence are apt to lead us to rest satisfied with the detection of error, without leading us to seek to establish truth in its place; † a state of mind of

* Lectures, i. 47.

† Magis habuit quod fugeret quam quod sequeretur.—Baudius.

which unfortunately there have been too many examples in the philosophic world, and which, besides its baneful influence upon the moral character, is unfavourable to the higher efforts even of our intellectual part.

In 1797 a few of the members of the Literary Society formed themselves into another association, more select, to which they gave the name of the Academy of Physics. The object of this institution was somewhat more ambitious than that of the former, and is set forth in the minute of their first meeting to be "the investigation of nature, the laws by which her phenomena are regulated, and the history of opinions concerning these laws." At this meeting, which was held on the 7th of January, there were present Messrs. Erskine, Brougham, Reddie, Brown, Rogerson, Birbeck, Logan, and Leyden. These gentlemen were afterwards joined by Lord Webb Seymour, Messrs. Horner, Jeffrey, Smyth, Gillespie, and many others.

For some time the society proceeded with great spirit;—and in the papers that were read, and in the conversation that took place upon them, were sown the germs that afterwards developed themselves in works that have occupied much of the public attention. Among the most active of the members were Messrs. Brougham, Horner, and Dr. Brown; and the institution owed much

to the truly philosophic spirit and excellent sense of Mr. Reddie. Dr. Brown having been secretary to the society at the time it was dissolved, the various documents connected with it were found among his papers. From these documents some extracts will be found at the end of this volume, which will be read with interest, not merely as calculated to afford information respecting the early studies of Dr. Brown, but also as affording materials for the literary history of the age. *

The meetings of the society continued with considerable regularity about three years, when, from various causes, the interest that was taken in it began to decline. The last entry in the minute book is of date 1st May, 1800. It is written in pencil, and is as follows:—"Present, Lord Webb Seymour, Messrs. Brougham, Reddie, Copland, Horner, Brown, Bennet, Craig, Lang.

"Some articles were read from the Memoirs relating to Egypt by the learned men who accompanied the French expedition."

The Academy of Physics will be interesting in the history of letters, not merely on account of the distinguished names that are to be found in the list of its members, but also as having given rise to a publication which has been conducted

* See Note E.

upon more liberal principles, displayed a greater proportion of talent, and exercised a greater influence upon public opinion, than any other similar work in the republic of letters. It can scarcely be necessary to add, that I allude to the Edinburgh Review.

When the Edinburgh Review commenced, the ideas of authorship being somewhat different from what they are at present, the papers were contributed without any pecuniary compensation. Some articles were written by Dr. Brown, and bear the marks of his genius. He was the author of the leading article of the second Number—a Review of the Philosophy of Kant,—and I believe every one who has attended to the subject, will allow that he has made it as intelligible as the nature of it admits. In reference to this subject, I may here insert two extracts from the letters of Dr. Currie. "I have heard that you are engaged in the Edinburgh Review, which makes a great impression here, and which certainly displays uncommon vigour and information. It struck me that the article on Kant must be from you. I received from it great pleasure and instruction. I could wish there was a little less severity in the Review, but I have scarcely now a right to speak, lest it should be imputed to personal feeling, having observed that there is a little touch at myself, or rather, perhaps, poor Burns, in the last number." * * *

In another letter he thus writes:—"I assure you that the compliment I paid you on the review of Kant was perfectly sincere. I had been endeavouring to penetrate into his system with no great success. The demonstration you have given of the points in which it agrees and disagrees with Berkeley, has, I think, thrown light upon the whole. I shall trouble myself no more with *transcendentalism*. I consider it as a philosophical hallucination. We must rest, after all, I believe, for the present, in the system of Dr. Reid. Such, at least, is the inclination of my mind. Mr. Stewart's view of the life and writings of this sage has given me extraordinary pleasure."

* * * *

His connexion with the Review, however, was but of brief continuance. Some liberties that were taken with one of his papers, by the gentleman who had the superintendence of the publication of the third number, led to a misunderstanding, which terminated in his withdrawing his assistance from the work.*

Many of Dr. Brown's friends regretted that any circumstance should have occurred to put an end to his connexion with the Review. To his immediate fame it certainly was in some degeee injurious, both because at that time there was no means by which a young man could so easily be

* See Note F.

brought into public notice as by writing in that work, and, more indirectly, because without imputing any improper motive, his name has scarcely ever appeared in it with the approbation it deserves. In other respects, however, the circumstance was perhaps not to be regretted. There are minds to which the neglect of their contemporaries is not disadvantageous. And the facilities to immediate applause, enjoyed by a contributor to a popular periodical publication, are not always favourable to those habits that seem necessary for the production of a work of permanent fame. Though repeatedly and earnestly solicited to join again the Edinburgh Review, he constantly declined, and he was never afterwards connected with any individual in any literary work.

From the last letter to Dr. Darwin contained in the preceding chapter, it appears that Dr. Brown was in 1796 engaged in the study of law, —a study to which he at first attached himself with the intention of preparing himself for the Scotch bar. He was led to make choice of this profession, not more by the flattering prospects it opens up to the aspiring aims of honourable ambition, than by the hope that he would find professional eminence not incompatible with attention to general learning. He soon discovered, however, that such a union, of which there were so many illustrious examples, would require a frame more robust than he possessed, and he

continued his legal studies only for a single year. For his own happiness he certainly acted wisely. Literature was the object of his idolatry, and the overwhelming pressure of business that falls to the lot of a successful lawyer could have brought no compensation to him, in all its varied advantages, for the sacrifice it would have required of the time that might have been devoted to letters and philosophy. The tranquil and humanizing occupations of a contemplative life had always irresistible charms for him; and for them, he, upon many occasions, relinquished the most flattering prospects of emolument and of temporary and local celebrity. The meed of servile ambition had no value in his eye, and the admirable lines of Pope are not less applicable to him than to the very amiable individual * of whom they were originally written.

> A poet blest beyond the poet's fate,
> Whom heaven kept sacred from the proud and great;
> Foe to loud praise, and friend to learned ease,
> Content with science in the vale of peace.

Had his taste allowed him to persevere in the study of law, he was unquestionably possessed of those qualifications † that would have insured success; and there is every reason for supposing that he would have distinguished himself equally with any of those individuals who commenced with

* Fenton. † See Note G.

him in the same course,—many of whom have since attained the highest celebrity as lawyers and statesmen.

It is of so much importance that men of liberal principles and philosophic views should engage in what is called the business of life, that we may regret that he should have departed from his original purpose. And in thinking of him, and of some others of his contemporaries of a similar temper of mind, we may apply the words of Cicero, when speaking of some of the illustrious philosophers who equalled in capacity many of the greatest lawgivers of antiquity. "*Eadem autem alii prudentia sed consilio ad vitae studia dispari, quietem atque otium secuti; ut Pythagoras, Democritus, Anaxagoras, a regendis civitatibus totos se ad cognitionem rerum transtulerunt; quae vita, propter tranquillitatem et propter ipsius scientiae suavitatem, qua nihil est hominibus jucundius, plures, quam utile fuit rebus publicis delectavit.*"*

Upon relinquishing the study of law he betook himself to that of medicine, and attended the usual course pursued by medical students from the year 1798 till the year 1803. During this time he was far from withdrawing his attention from letters. Besides his contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*, and his papers and speeches in the societies, to which we have allud-

* De Oratore.

ed, most of the pieces contained in the first edition of his poems were then written. To the languages he was already acquainted with he added the knowledge of German, and dipped deeply into the German philosophy. In consequence of the various pursuits in which he indulged, many of his friends entertained apprehensions in regard to his progress in professional acquirements. And his mother, when she saw the multitude of literary works that he perused, expressed many a fear that medicine was neglected. For this anxiety, however, there was no real cause. It was Dr. Brown's ambition to excel in every thing he undertook; and he assured her that he would not be contented with merely obtaining his degree unless it was with honour. This pledge he amply redeemed. In the various examinations preparatory to receiving a diploma, which are conducted with an attention and minuteness that other learned bodies, if they consulted the dignity and respectability of their profession, would do well to imitate, he acquitted himself to the entire satisfaction of the professors before whom he appeared. Dr. Gregory was particularly struck with his proficiency, and mentioned, after his examination, that independently of uncommon knowledge in medicine, he expressed himself in Latin with the greatest elegance, and as fast as he could speak in English. The superior appearance that he made evidently

resulted from a systematic attention to every branch of study. His acquirements were such as to supersede the necessity of having recourse to the preparative instructions of a medical assistant.

His thesis was entitled *De Somno*, and it was equally admired for the ingenuity of the theory and the purity of the Latinity. His thoughts had first been turned to this subject, as has been already alluded to, upon reading Mr. Stewart's *Elements*. The following testimony to its philosophic merits is from a very competent judge.*

* * * "I take every opportunity that occurs of inquiring after you, your health, and your studies. I sincerely wish such opportunities were more frequent. But some time or other we shall meet again. I ought to have thanked you myself for the thesis you sent me, which I read with much pleasure and a great deal of conviction. I was always of opinion that Mr. Stewart put the subject in a wrong way; and you appear to me to have seen it almost quite aright." * * *

Its classical merits were such as might have been expected from the attention that had been paid to his education in England, and from his

* Mr. Horner.

constant habits of composing in Latin, both in prose and verse.

A few months after receiving his degree he gave to the world the first edition of his poems, in two volumes. It has been already mentioned, that the greater number of the pieces contained in them were written while he was at college. They are of a very miscellaneous description, and are certainly inferior to many of his subsequent compositions. At the same time they all exhibit the marks of an original and powerful genius and of a singularly refined taste. The manner in which they were noticed by the reviews of that period, was, upon the whole, very flattering, though there were not wanting some malicious exceptions. With the public in general their reception was far from being favourable.—The remarks that I have to make upon his merits as a poet are reserved for a separate chapter. In the mean time the following extract from one of the many complimentary letters that he received upon the occasion, exactly expresses my sentiments in regard to his first poetical publication. I trust the very accomplished writer will excuse the liberty I take in making such an extract; and that her regard for the memory of the author will make her willing to bear testimony to his merits, though her remarks were originally written without the remotest view to publication,

* * * "One thing I can safely promise you, that the longer they are known they will be the more admired. The pathetic ones are irresistible; and there is a variety of style, a depth of thought in the serious, of wit in the gayer, and of purity and nobleness of mind in all that must at last establish the character they deserve. I dare say some will affect to say that they are too metaphysical and difficult to be understood; and I don't deny that many of them do require to be read with the 'understanding and the heart' (as we ought to sing psalms,) but I am sure there is variety to please good judges in every style of poetry; and it is not possible to read any one in the volumes without thinking more highly of the talents of the author than before. You may say you like other styles of poetry better than that particular poem; but you must allow it to be excellent in its kind. My eagerness on the subject makes me forget to whom I am writing; but I shall make no apology, not even for the carelessness with which I have told my real feelings."

* * * * *

The testimony of Lord Woodhouselee is also worthy of being preserved, as his truly classical taste made him peculiarly qualified to form a correct judgment. Upon the publication of his poems, Dr. Brown sent a copy of them and of his thesis to that amiable and accomplished individual, accompanied with a copy of very ad-

mirable Latin verses, with the following title: *Dominum agri Woodhouselee alloquitur Somnus.*

The following is the answer which he received.

My Dear Sir,—I return you my best thanks for the very handsome present you have made me of your two elegant volumes, together with your Thesis, and the beautiful address of *Somnus* which accompanied it. The Thesis I had read on its first publication, several months ago, and admired it as a most classical composition, combining sound philosophical reasoning with ingenious and picturesque imagery, an union rarely to be met with. The address of Somnus has, in my opinion, very high merit, and evinces not only the fancy of a poet, but an admirable command of elegant and classical phraseology, with a perfect intelligence of the mechanism of Latin verse, which last accomplishment, I suppose, is as rare in Scotland as the *Cappercailzie.* From your most elegant volumes I promise myself a great deal of pleasure, judging from the fine introductory address, the three Sonnets, entitled *The Infant,* and that series of Sonnets entitled *Mary,** which I think are eminenty beautiful, and most powerfully affecting

* Afterwards published in a separate volume, under the title of *Emily.*

—for these are all that a mass of irksome and perplexing law-processes now upon my table have yet allowed me to look at. But six weeks end the Session, and then, *redeunt Saturnia regna*; when I trust you will renew your acquaintance with those Dryads and Naiads of Woodhouselee, whom you have so sweetly celebrated. Meanwhile, believe me, with great regard, &c. &c.

ALEX. FRAZER TYTLER.

Prince's Street, June 7, 1804.

The whole of Lord Woodhouselee's praise appears to be just and discriminating. The union of philosophical reasoning, with ingenious and picturesque imagery, that he has remarked in the Thesis, is to be found in various parts of Dr. Brown's writings. I feel that there is a degree of presumption in venturing to add any thing to what has been suggested by so classical a taste in regard to the Latin verses, and yet I think it but justice to Dr. Brown to remark, that they seem to me to possess a merit that Lord Woodhouselee has omitted to notice. Johnson mentions it as a peculiar excellence of Smith's Ode in the *Musae Anglicanae*, that it expresses in classical language images not classical. But I conceive that Dr. Brown has the higher merit of conveying, under imagery and phraseology truly classical, trains of sentiment, which, though not

unusual in the refinement of modern times, are without any example amongst the writers of antiquity. An idea of what I allude to will be better conveyed by an extract than by any description. The whole of the *Hendecasyllabics*, addressed to Wedgwood, which are to be found among the Notes of the *War-Fiend*, are illustrative of the species of excellence referred to as peculiar to him. I shall transcribe merely a few lines :—

Ad Amicum,

Coelum mitius valetudinis causa petiturum.

O sero sociate amore, rapte
O desideriis citis, abibis !
Ibis,—nec mihi tum licebit aequor
Longum fallere, solitudinemve,
Qua nil accipit assonatque pectus,
Turbae inter strepitus silentiorem,
Una blandiloqua replere voce.
* * *
Caram suave genam rosa videre
Vix florere nova, cum adhuc procellae,
Morbi post hiemem, leves ad aurae
Motus, creber adest timor ;—sed omnem
Vernam cum modo languidus salutem
Jam certus bibit, altiusque largas
Spirans delicias capit, diemque
Dulcem taedia post amara lucis
Miratur,—reputare tum videnti
Quanto suavius, " Ipse gaudia ista,—
Haec feci ipse :—meus, meus valescit ;—
Quod sperat, quod amat, mei est amoris."

The name of Wedgwood reminds me to return to my narrative. That very amiable and accomplished individual, who seems to be remembered with a kindness of admiration, of which the history of letters affords but few examples, having in his last illness resolved upon a voyage to Madeira, in the hope of deriving benefit from a warmer climate, invited Dr. Brown to accompany him as his physician and friend.* This is a circumstance that ought not to be omitted in the life of Dr. Brown, who exhibited a similar union of moral and intellectual graces, and who resembles him also in an early death. The correspondence between them was equally honourable to both, though not of a nature to be made public. At one time the high idea he had formed of Mr. Wedgwood, and the anxious wishes of many friends, who conceived that his own health might be improved by a change of climate, had almost induced him to accept of the invitation. But upon learning that the destination of the voyage was changed from Madeira to the West Indies, he immediately relinquished all thoughts of it. Upon this occasion he wrote the verses containing the preceding extract. I shall here quote a part of the translation of them which he afterwards published, not merely as an

* See Poetical Works, iii. 96.

interesting record of his feelings, but also to afford to the reader an opportunity of comparing the two. To those who consider them together, they will be found illustrative of the genius of the two languages, and still more of the effect that the language we employ has upon the current of our thoughts and feelings; a subject, I may remark, to which Dr. Brown paid great attention, and which he conceived to afford very valuable lights in our inquiries into mind. The difference between the writings of Dr. Gregory in Latin, and in English, was considered by him as a valuable study in this respect.

O, with too late a love my WEDGWOOD known,
Too early from that love a wanderer flown!
Thou seek'st a distant sky,—nor mine to stray,
The friend and soother of thy watery way;
In the heart's solitude, more mute and drear
For all that howls and clamours on the ear,
With one kind voice that desert to dispel,
And turn to home a cabin's joyless cell.

* * * *

Sweet, when the Winter of disease is past,
And the glad Spring of health returns at last,
On a lov'd cheek, long bloomless, to behold
Its first faint leaf the trembling rose unfold;
Tho', mindful still of blighting gales of death,
We almost dread the zephyr's gentlest breath,
But when the bosom, fresh with conscious power,
Drinks the full gladness of the vernal hour,
And, after suns which langour fear'd to greet,
Half wonders that a day can be so sweet,—

O doubly blest, who then can trusting view
The buoyant step, the vigour-beaming hue,
And, love's fond cares recall'd, with joy divine,
Can whisper to his heart,—That work is mine!

* * * * *

The anticipations of returning health, which the remaining part of the poem expresses with great beauty, were never realised. As the period fixed for his departure approached, the progress of his disease became swifter. And the answer to the letter in which Dr. Brown so tenderly expressed hopes of his recovery, was an intimation that his amiable and gifted friend was no more. Such was the interest he had excited in the mind of Dr. Brown, that he could not have been more affected, had the intelligence announced the death of a friend of many years. The Monody which he wrote upon his death expresses very faithfully the depth of his emotions. I must confine myself to a single extract, where he describes the effect of disease, in giving to the graces of a virtuous mind a tenderer and more attractive charm. The comparison is original, and touched with infinite elegance.

Ev'n while the languor strove thy heart to chill,
It soften'd but to meekness gentler still,
And, in the silent watches of alarm,
Breath'd on the sadden'd eye that tender charm
Which calls affection at each glance to muse,
And love more warmly what it fears to lose.

When, with sure power, that must destroy at last,
Steals on the summer grove the treacherous blast,
Soft o'er each shade its lingering pinions play,
Nor dash one trembling leaflet from the spray,
On the bright verdure, melting as it glows,
A calmer milder tint alone it throws,
With shadowy softness varies every bloom,
And seems to nurse its beauty, not consume,
To pensive joy the gaze more frequent calls;—
And sweetest charms the foliage,—when it falls.

The next publication of Dr. Brown was occasioned by the well-known controversy in regard to Mr. Leslie. For many years there had been an obvious intention on the part of many members of the church of filling up the vacant chairs of Universities with the clergymen of the cities of the University seat, and their environs. This practice, though it had been strenuously resisted from the beginning, was gaining ground with a rapidity that threatened the best interests of literature and religion. Upon the promotion of Mr. Playfair to the chair of Natural Philosophy, the claims of Mr. Leslie to the mathematical class, which had been left vacant, were so incontestibly superior to those of any clerical competitor, as to recommend him to the choice of the electors. The systematic and determined purpose of making the union of offices universal, may be judged of from the means which in these circumstances

were resorted to. As there could be no dispute in regard to Mr. Leslie's scientific qualifications, an attempt was made to exclude him on account of his principles; and, by a course of proceeding altogether unprecedented, an endeavour was made to prevent his election. The ostensible ground on which this proceeding was founded, was a note in Mr. Leslie's ingenious essay on Heat, in which he mentions with approbation Mr. Hume's doctrine respecting causation.

In a question where the interests of science and the honour of Scotland were so vitally concerned, Dr. Brown could not remain an unconcerned spectator. Though personally unacquainted with Mr. Leslie, he felt indignant that, while he was receiving the highest honours in England, he should meet with such shameful injustice in his own country, and came voluntarily forward as one of his most zealous advocates. While other writers endeavoured to explain away what seemed objectionable in Mr. Leslie's note, and to reconcile it with the tenets of sound philosophy; and while even Mr. Leslie had unadvisedly been induced to make some concessions in regard to the limitations with which his praise of Hume was to be received, Dr. Brown boldly undertook to prove that the doctrine of Hume upon this point was not fraught with one dangerous consequence,—and though he detected some glaring errors in his

theory, he demonstrated that these errors are of the most harmless description, and not inconsistent with belief in any of the fundamental truths of religion or morality.

As Dr. Brown in his pamphlet studiously avoids all reference to the circumstances that occasioned* it, and confines himself exclusively to an abstract examination of the positions contained in Mr. Hume's Essay; I do not feel myself called upon to offer any farther remarks upon the proceedings connected with Mr. Leslie's appointment—proceedings which it may be hoped will in this country prove the last chapter in the history of priestly intolerance at least, if not of priestly ambition.

The great merits of Dr. Brown's "Examination" were universally acknowledged. It was alluded to in the most flattering manner in the Edinburgh Review, in a very able article by Mr. Horner. The following short note from Mr. Stewart is extremely valuable.

My Dear Sir,

It was not in my power till this morning to sit down to your essay with the attention it deserved. I have just read it with a careful and critical eye, and can with great truth assure you that I have received from it *much* pleasure and *much*

* See Note H.

instruction. Believe me ever, with the sincerest regard,

My Dear Sir,

Yours most truly,

Dugald Stewart.

A second edition of this essay, considerably enlarged, was published in 1806. And in 1818 it appeared in a third edition, matured and perfected into one of the most elegant and profound works on the philosophy of mind that has appeared in modern times. As the doctrines it contains lie at the foundation of all his philosophy, it may be convenient to anticipate a little, and though somewhat out of place, to make some obervations upon the work as it appeared in its most perfect form.

CHAPTER IV.

INQUIRY INTO THE RELATION OF CAUSE AND EFFECT.

THE inquiries into the subject of causation may naturally be divided into two parts. The object of the one is to fix what it is which constitutes the relation between cause and effect,—and of the other, to ascertain the circumstances in which the belief of the relation arises in the mind. Under the first head are comprehended such questions as the following:—Is there any relation between cause and effect corresponding to our feeling of it, or is it merely a figment of the mind? Is the connexion merely casual, or is it fixed and permanent? And if it is permanent, whether there is something invisible and undiscoverable intervening between all perceived events, and binding them together in indissoluble union, or whether invariableness of antecedence and consequence constitutes all that can be philosophi-

cally meant, when we speak of the relation. The second part is employed about such questions as the following:—whether our belief of power is the result of experience, or whether there is not in the antecedent itself what might enable us to anticipate a change. And if our knowledge of power is entirely dependent upon experience, whether it is by a process of reasoning founded on that experience, that we demonstrate the existence of this physical relation, or whether our belief arises intuitively.

The substance of Dr. Brown's doctrines respecting the nature of the relation between cause and effect is contained in the following extract.

"A cause, in the fullest definition which it philosophically admits, may be said to be, *that which immediately precedes any change, and which, existing at any time in similar circumstances, has been always, and will be always, immediately followed by a similar change.*. Priority in the sequence observed, and invariableness of antecedence in the past and future sequences supposed, are the elements, and the only elements, combined in the notion of a cause. By a conversion of terms, we obtain a definition of the correlative *effect*; and *power*, as I have before said, is only another word for expressing abstractly and briefly the antecedence itself, and the invariableness of the relation.

"The words *property* and *quality* admit of ex-

actly the same definition, expressing only a certain relation of invariable antecedence and consequence, in changes that take place on the presence of the substance to which they are ascribed. They are strictly synonymous with *power;* or at least the only difference is, that *property* and *quality*, as commonly used, comprehend both the *powers* and *susceptibilities* of substances,—the powers of producing changes, and the susceptibilities of being changed. We say equally that it is a property or quality of water to melt salt, and that it is one of its qualities or properties to freeze or become solid on the subtraction of a certain quantity of heat; but we do not commonly use the word power in the latter of these cases, and say that water has the power of being frozen. This is indeed what Locke, and many other writers before and after him, have expressed by the phrase *passive power*, in contradistinction from what they term *active power;* but since power, in general language, is confined to the producer of change, it appears to me less awkward and more accurate to limit the application of it in philosophy also to substances, the existence of which, in certain circumstances, is immediately *antecedent* to a change in another substance, and to employ the word susceptibility, with reference to the *consequent* change, in speaking of the substance itself in which the change takes place.

"With this difference, which may or may not be admitted, and with this difference only, *power*, *property*, and *quality* are, in the physical use of these terms, exactly synonymous. Water has the *power* of melting salt; it is a *property* of water to melt salt; it is a *quality* of water to melt salt: all these varieties of expression signify precisely the same thing—that when water is poured upon salt, the solid will take the form of a liquid, and its particles be diffused in continued combination through the mass. Two parts of a sequence of physical events are before our mind; the addition of water to salt, and the consequent liquefaction of what was before a crystalline solid. When we speak of all the powers of a body, we consider it as existing in a variety of circumstances, and consider at the same time all the changes that are or may be in these circumstances its immediate effects. When we speak of all the qualities of a body, or of all its properties, we mean nothing more, and we mean nothing less. Certain substances are conceived by us, and certain changes that take place in them, which, we believe, will be uniformly the same, as often as the substances of which we speak exist in circumstances exactly the same.

"The powers, qualities, or properties of a substance are not to be regarded then as any thing superadded to the substance, or distinct from it. They are only the substance itself, considered in

26491

relation to various changes that take place when it exists in peculiar circumstances."—Pp. 17–21.

The first objection to the account given of power in the above extract that I shall allude to is, that it is not a just representation of our feelings upon the subject. We have only, it is said, to consult the state of our own minds, when we think of power or efficiency, to be satisfied how very incorrect any definition is that makes it nothing more than invariableness of antecedence. How seldom, for example, when we quickly remove our hand from a heated body, because we believe that body to be the cause of a painful sensation, how seldom do we consider that such a body would, in all similar circumstances, excite a painful sensation in us of the same description! We think merely of the *present* pain, and of that body by which it is occasioned; and we must be in a very peculiar frame of mind indeed, if we begin to reflect either upon past or future instances of an exactly similar sequence of events. I should not have thought it necessary to take notice of this objection, which admits of so easy an answer, had I not more than once seen it gravely adduced. The least reflection must show, that the very same objection might be made to almost every philosophical definition. Does every square or circular body that we witness, excite in us the ideas contained in Euclid's definition of these figures; or does the fact that this is not the

case once in a thousand times, make the definitions less correct? It is of importance to remark, that we have nothing to do with the vulgar conceptions that are entertained respecting causation in general, or with the ideas that particular instances of causation excite in the minds even of men of philosophic habits. How erroneous would be our definitions even of the simple qualities of matter, such as colour, weight, &c. if we were to follow our own impressions! And it is obvious, that the exact nature of the relations of objects is more likely to be erroneously conceived by us. Our great aim ought to be to abstract our minds from the partial and accidental feelings that are excited in us by single instances of causation, and from the mysterious ideas with which, from various prejudices, we have involved every thing connected with power, and attend simply to the relation between cause and effect itself, as it is in nature. When we do this, we will have less difficulty in understanding, that it is nothing more than immediate and invariable antecedence and consequence.

But, even with this explanation, it may still be objected that it is not a just definition of the relation itself. It will indeed be readily admitted by all, that the definition is correct in one respect, and that whatever more we mean by a cause, we at least mean this, that no change can take place without an antecedent, and that the

antecedent, which would in all similar circumstances be followed by the same change, is the cause. But then it will be urged, that there is something more than mere invariableness of antecedence,—that there is also efficiency; there is the power to produce; there is something without which the change would not have been;—in consequence of which, power may exist in a body, while, from its never being called into exertion, there may never be antecedence at all. No one, for example, it may be said, will deny, that a fire of a certain temperature has the power of melting steel; but it may easily happen that no steel is placed in it, so that here we have power, but neither antecedence nor consequence.—Nor is this the only objection to the definition. It is maintained, that there not only may be power without antecedence, but that there may be invariableness of antecedence without power. No one thing has succeeded another with greater regularity from the beginning of the world than day has succeeded night, and yet it is never supposed that the one is the cause of the other.—It may be urged then, that the definition errs in two ways. In the first place, it errs by defect; for there is something more than invariable antecedence;—and, in the second place, it errs by too great generality; for there may be invariableness of antecedence without power.

Now, before entering directly into the argu-

ment, and proving that there is nothing more in the relation between cause and effect than what is expressed in the definition, it may be proper to make a few preliminary remarks upon the terms of the definition.

Let it be observed, in the first place, then, that a cause is defined to be, not merely the antecedent, but the *invariable* antecedent of some change. We have always been so much accustomed to employ the word *antecedent* to express a relation merely casual, that even the qualifying epithet *invariable* is scarcely sufficient to prevent us from considering it as expressive of something accidental. This is no random assertion; for, in proof of it, reference might be made to an author, who, after speaking of "*invariable antecedence*," immediately subjoins, this "*casual combination.*" The least reflection, however, must surely show, that there is here a contradiction in terms; for how can an *invariable* relation be said to be *casual?* This distinction cannot be too frequently remarked, because, from the reason above mentioned, we are in danger every moment of forgetting it in our reasonings. At the same time, it appears so obvious when once pointed out, that I cannot suppose any illustration to be necessary to show that it is a real distinction. Now, with this distinction in view, let the opposers of Dr. Brown consider, whether the difference between accidental antecedence and uniform antecedence does not con-

all the difference that is to be found between *casual connexion* and *efficiency*. There *is* certainly a difference between the observation of a casual sequence of events, and the feeling that one object will never appear without being followed by another; and is not this difference the essence of our idea of efficiency?

It may be here observed, in regard to the idea of those who maintain that our notion of a cause implies *that the effect would not have taken place without the existence of the cause*, that this form of definition is one which readily occurs to express our notion of causation, and that, in general, it may be correct. There are, however, cases in which it would not apply. It may, in fact, frequently happen, that in the various trains of events that are continually going on, there may be two antecedents to one event, so that though the one *had not been*, the event would still have taken place. For example, we say, when a sword enters a vital part, that it is the cause of the death of the individual; by which we mean, that whenever this takes place, death will be the consequence. But there may be innumerable antecedents to the event that we denominate death, and one of these might have occurred at the same moment that the fatal blow was given. In this, and in all similar cases, it is obvious that the proposed definition would be inapplicable. It might perhaps be possible to guard the definition against

this objection; but it is unnecessary, as all that is implied in it is in reality contained in the one given by Dr. Brown.

The *next* thing which seems worthy of remark respecting Dr. Brown's definition is, that a cause is said to be not merely the *invariable* but also the *immediate* antecedent of a change. And though not expressed in the definition, it is of course implied, that a cause is not always that which *appears to us* to be the immediate antecedent of a change, but that which is in nature the immediate antecedent.—In the succession of events many parts of the process are so obscure, and different trains interfere so much with each other, and what appears a difference in the state of objects is so often nothing more than a difference in our relative situation to them, that if the circumstances above mentioned are not attended to, the objections to Dr. Brown's definition must appear altogether insurmountable. An attention to these circumstances, however, will show that many of the objections arise from misapprehension. For example, to take Dr. Reid's objection as to day succeeding night. It may be observed in the first place, that the real antecedent to the changes of day and night, is the position of the earth in regard to the sun. And in a more popular sense, we do not *perceive* day as the *immediate* consequence of night:

"How often, during a long and sleepless night,

does the sensation of darkness,—if that phrase may be accurately used, to express a state of mind that is merely exclusive of visual affections of every sort,—exist without being followed by the sensation of light! We perceive the gloom, in this negative sense of the term *perception*;—we feel our own position in bed, or some bodily or mental uneasiness, which prevents repose;—innumerable thoughts arise at intervals in our mind, and with these the perception of gloom is occasionally mingled, without being followed by the perception of light. At last light is perceived, and, as mingled with all our occupations and pleasures, is perceived innumerable times during the day, without having for its immediate consequence, the sensation of darkness. Can we then be said to have an uniform experience of the conjunction of the two sensations; or do they not rather appear to follow each other loosely and variously, like those irregular successions of events which we denominate accidental?" *—Pp. 385,-386.

The circumstances that were pointed out at the beginning of the former paragraph, contain an

* I have quoted only one of Dr. Brown's arguments; those who wish to see Dr. Reid's difficulty fully discussed, may consult the passage from which this extract has been made. They will find not only great acuteness in the conduct of the argument, but also several truly philosophical reflections, admirably calculated to prevent us from being misled by the fallacy that deceived Dr. Reid.

answer to all the vulgar objections respecting invariable antecedence where there is no causation. It will uniformly be found, that in these cases the antecedents are not *immediate*, or they are immediate in appearance only, and not in reality. A single instance will be sufficient to illustrate my meaning. One fixed star, it may be said, always appears in the east immediately before another; or, in other words, is the uniform and immediate antecedent of another, and yet we do not suppose it to be the cause of the motion of the second. Now the reason of this is, that we have been taught that the change in the appearance of the fixed stars is a change in us and not in them. Though they appear to be in motion, they are in reality, or at least relatively to us they are at rest. The real and immediate antecedent to the change in the appearance of the heavens, is the motion of the earth upon its axis; and we consider that motion, and not the stars themselves, as the cause of the new appearance.

With these observations on the definition, I should willingly conclude my remarks, being convinced that most of my readers will be satisfied with Dr. Brown's account of the nature of power. For the sake of those, however, who may still consider it as incorrect, it may be necessary to enter a little more into the argument. At the same time, I shall endeavour to make my remarks as brief as is at all consistent with per-

spicuity. To prevent all verbal dispute, I shall confine my remarks to substances that are considered to be merely simple.

Let us take a piece of gold, which at present is considered as a simple substance, and though in the progress of discovery it should be ascertained that even the metals are compound, the argument would not in the least be affected, as one of the component simple parts might, in that case, be substituted. Gold then has a particular colour, is of a particular specific gravity, and is dissoluble in aqua regia. Now, on the one hand, it is said that here is one substance, and nothing more than one substance, which, when placed in certain relations to other bodies, will always be followed by certain changes—on the other hand, it is said, that there is something more than a substance in different relations—there are, besides the simple object, different powers which always exist in the body, though they are exerted only upon particular occasions. Dr. Brown's opinion is, that gold is a simple substance, and that its colour, specific gravity, &c. are not powers of the substance by which it affects us with a certain sensation, tends to the earth with a certain degree of force, &c.—they are merely relations that the simple substance has to other substances. According to the opponents of Dr. Brown, the simple substance gold is possessed of different powers.—To those who are but little accustomed to analyse very nicely their ideas

of the qualities of bodies, it will, I am aware, appear at first sight, almost self-evident, that the latter opinion is the correct one. Is it to be supposed, they will say, that there is no difference between the colour and the gravity of a body? And is it not obvious to the common sense of mankind, that there must be different powers in the substance for producing results so different? Now, it is very readily admitted, that there is a very great difference between the colour of an object and its gravity, or any of its other properties. It is the inference only, that there must be different powers in the body, one of exciting a certain feeling in the mind, another of attracting the earth, and so on, that is denied. This then is the point at issue.

Now, without any minute analysis of what we mean by colour, gravitation, &c. it may be observed, that the colour, not being in the object, is merely an effect of the object on our minds, and the approach of the earth is not in the object, it is an effect produced on the earth. And, as the objects operated upon are essentially different, there is no occasion for supposing two different powers for the two different results. It might be demonstrated, that, if the substance were one, and nothing more than one, it would, when placed in relation to objects so essentially different as a mass of matter, and a spiritual substance, produce essentially different effects. To suppose then, that there must be two powers when one is suffi-

cient to account for all that we see produced, is an unwarrantable violation of Newton's simplest axiom. How different is the sensation of heat upon approaching the finger to a lighted candle, and the melting of wax when it is placed in a similar situation. But no one surely will maintain, that the heat has the power of melting wax, and a different power for exciting a peculiar sensation—there is nothing but the heat simply, in relation to two different substances. Why then should we any more suppose different powers inherent in the gold, or indeed in any other simple substance?

But, to enter a little more minutely into the nature of the qualities of simple substances;—What do we mean by the *colour* of the gold? It is now universally admitted by philosophers, that the colour is in our mind, and not in the object. And yet we have been so accustomed to consider colour as something spread over the surface of a body, that it is no uncommon thing to see a train of reasoning starting with the proposition, that there is no such thing as colour in a body, and then gradually falling into the very prejudice that it set out with denying. It is, however, an entire delusion: and the strength of the prejudice arises, not from any approximation to truth, but merely from the frequency of the associated sensation of colour, and of extended surface. We never imagine that the voice that is reverberated from a

wall or rock resides in the wall or rock, as any way distinguishable from them. But if we had lived all our days where the roaring of a mountain cataract was re-echoed from a rocky steep, we should have found it as difficult to separate the reflected sound from the mountain, or to conceive that the one could exist without the other, as we find it difficult to conceive an extended body without colour. When we throw an elastic ball against a hard substance, it will rebound and may strike us. Now, we might just as well spread over in our imaginations, upon the wall or other hard body, the pain that we feel, as we spread over it in our imaginations the colour that is reflected from it.—But it may be said, though the sensation, indeed, of colour does not reside in the coloured substance, still the *cause* of the sensation resides in it, and that this unknown cause of a known effect is distinguishable from the gravity and other qualities of the body. Let us inquire into the correctness of this statement. What are we to understand by the cause of the sensation of colour residing in the substance? The immediate cause of the sensation of colour is a particular state of the brain, induced by an affection of the optic nerve, which again is occasioned by the presence of particular rays of light reflected from the gold. All then that can be said of the gold is, that it reflects certain rays of light. Now, what is here essentially different from its

power of being attracted by and attracting the earth? The gold affords admission to some of the solar rays, it repels others of them; but there is nothing here but simple repulsion and attraction. Now, we surely would never suppose this to be any thing different from the body itself. A net may be so constructed as to retain objects of a certain size, and to afford a passage to those that are smaller. But we do not think this capacity of retaining and transmitting, any thing different from the net. There is in reality nothing more than a particular construction of matter of a certain description, and the retention or transmission of other objects is merely a particular relation that it has to these objects.—It is precisely the same with the power possessed by any substance of reflecting light.—Then as to the *gravity* of the gold, it is nothing more than the tendency of the gold to the earth, and the tendency of the earth to the gold. It cannot therefore be distinguishable from the substance.—The *form* is the relation that the parts of a body bear to each other in space. This is now universally admitted, though for ages it was supposed that Form was something very wonderful, and altogether distinct from matter, and which, indeed, might account for all the other properties of matter. In short, the same kind of apprehensions were entertained respecting it, that are now entertained respecting power.—The same remarks might be extended to

the malleability, the hardness, the dissolubility of the gold. And all that could be found would be the fact, that something that we believed, and could not but believe to be external to us, and whose presence affected us with certain sensations and feelings, when placed in particular relations to other bodies, showed a tendency to approach, or to recede.—Even the relation of substances to us is nothing more than attraction or repulsion—either in reference to the particles of the substances themselves, or to our bodies. Roughness or smoothness is obviously nothing more than the particular position of the particles of substances occasioned by their affinities and repulsions, by which the particles at the surface of our hands or other parts of our bodies are affected in a particular manner, which affection of our bodies is followed by an agreeable or disagreeable or indifferent mental state. The taste of bodies, and the smell also, may very probably be nothing more than a particular disposition of particles, which, affecting our gustual or olfactory nerves with smooth or angular surfaces, induces a state of these nerves, which is followed by the sensation of taste or smell. It cannot be necessary to follow out this train of reflection, as the very same or similar observations would obviously apply to every quality of body.

Colour, gravity, &c. then, are not different from the substances in which, by a figure of

speech, they are said to reside; they are merely the substance itself in relation to certain other substances. When it is said that the qualities, or properties, or powers of a simple substance are different from one another, the words, qualities, &c. are there used in a different sense from that in which we are now using them. If we mean by the words colour, attraction, &c. the effects produced in other substances, viz. the sensation in us, the motion in another substance, &c. then colour, attraction, &c. are different; but if we mean the cause that produces these effects, it is not different, it is one and the same. There is just one substance existing in different relations, and nothing more than one substance.

If difference in the consequent implies difference in the antecedent, the same might be said of every species of relation. The relation (in space) of Britain to France, is altogether different from the relation of Britain to America. But it was never supposed by any one, that Britain is situated west from France by one quality, property, or what you will, and east from America by another quality or property. If, however, the ancient doctrines in regard to powers are true, this absurdity as to the relative situation of places must be maintained as a necessary consequence.

May it not however be said, that one quality might be conceived to exist without another,

and does not this prove that the powers are different? This objection probably proceeds from not distinguishing between simple and compound substances. In compound substances, there are many qualities that might exist the one without the other, and indeed this is the very essence of a compound body; but this is not the case with a simple substance. The properties of a simple substance could not, according to the present constitution of nature, exist the one without the other. We, indeed, have no difficulty in conceiving gold to be heavy, &c. without its yellow colour, or in conceiving it to be yellow without its specific gravity. But this is no proof whatever that the thing is possible. It proceeds merely from our ignorance of the properties of other bodies and their mutual adaptations and relations. If we were intimately acquainted with the nature of substances, it might be as difficult for us to form a notion of gold, without the power of reflecting particular rays of the sun, as it is for us to conceive a vessel capable of holding a pint of water, and yet incapable of containing the same quantity of any other substance; or to conceive that there could be two equal quantities, which yet had different ratios to a third quantity. But even take it for granted, that in simple substances there might be one power without another, and the absurdity of the assumption may be proved by a *reductio ad absurdum*. The assumption is, that a substance

might be possessed but of a single power. How then does this power co-exist with other powers? There must either be no reason at all for a fact that holds universally, or there must be, besides the power, a tendency to co-exist with other powers; which translated into the language of our opponents, signifies that this substance which has only one power has in reality two.

Upon philosophical principles then it appears, that there is not the shadow of an objection to Dr. Brown's account of causation when properly understood. But is there not, it may be asked, a theological objection to it, and are we not in danger of lessening the dignity of the great First Cause, in thus admitting power to reside anywhere but in his will? The fear of this consequence has led philosophers to form many absurd ideas respecting the nature of power. It led, in the first place, to the occasional causes of Des Cartes, and then to the doctrine of efficient, as distinguished from physical causes, which indeed is only a new form of the doctrine of Des Cartes, and which may, before the publication of Dr. Brown's Essay, be considered as the universal tenet of theistical philosophers. As this is a subject of the very greatest importance, it is necessary to give Dr. Brown's arguments upon it in his own language.

"It is of so much importance, for the strengthening of human weakness, and the consolation of

human suffering, that we should have a full conviction of the dependence of all events on the great Source of being; that a doctrine would indeed be perilous, which might seem to loosen, however slightly, that tie of universal nature. But we may err, and in this case, as I conceive, have very generally erred, in our notion of the sort of dependence, which seems at once best accordant with the phenomena, and most suitable to the divine Majesty. The power of the Omnipotent is indeed so transcendent in itself, that the loftiest imagery and language which we can borrow from a few passing events in the boundlessness of nature, must be feeble to express its force and universality. When we attempt, therefore, to add to it in our conception, we run some risk of degrading the Excellence, which, as it is far above every earthly glory, it must always be impossible for us to elevate by expressions of earthly praise, that are the only homage which we can offer to it from the dust on which we tread.

"What the holiest views of God and the universe require of us to believe, is, that all things are what they are, in consequence of that divine will, to the fulfilment of whose gracious design it was necessary that every thing should be what it is; and that He whose will was the source of all the qualities which created things display, may, if it seem good to him, suspend or variously modify the qualities which himself had given, or be in

any other way the direct operator of extraordinary changes. We know God as a Creator in the things which are really existing, that mark, in the harmony of their mutual agencies, however varied they may seem to be, a general purpose, and therefore a contriver; and we believe in God as the Providential Governor of the world; that is to say, we believe that the world, which he has so richly endowed, and the living beings, for whose use he seems so richly to have endowed it, cannot be indifferent to him who made that magnificent provision, but must, on the contrary, be a continued object of his benevolent contemplation: and therefore, since all things are subject to his will, and no greater power seems necessary to suspend any tendency of nature than what originally produced it,—*if* there should be circumstances in which it would be of greater advantage upon the whole, that the ordinary tendency should not continue, we see no reason *a priori* for disbelieving that a difference of event *may* be directly produced by Him, even without our knowledge, in those rare cases in which the temporary deviation would be for the same gracious end as that which fixed the general regularity.

"But God the Creator, and God the Providential Governor of the world, are not necessarily God the immediate producer of every change. In that great system which we call the universe, all things are what they are, in consequence of his primary will;

but if they were wholly incapable of affecting any thing, they would virtually themselves be as nothing. When we speak of the laws of nature, indeed, we only use a general phrase, expressive of the accustomed order of the sequences of the phenomena of nature. But though in this application the word law is not explanatory of any thing, and expresses merely an order of succession which takes place before us, there *is* such a regular order of sequences, and what we call the qualities, powers, or properties of things, are only their relations to this very order. An object, therefore, which is not formed to be the antecedent of any change, and on the presence of which, accordingly, in all imaginable circumstances, no change can be expected as its immediate consequent, more than if it were not existing, is an object that has no power, property, or quality whatever. That substance has the quality of heat which excites in us, or occasions in us as a subsequent change, the sensation of warmth; that has the quality of greenness, the presence of which is the antecedent of a peculiar visual sensation in our mind; that has the quality of heaviness, which presses down the scale of a balance that was before in equilibrium.....If matter be incapable of acting upon matter, or upon mind, it has no qualities by which its existence can become known; and if it have no qualities by which its existence can become known, what is it of which,

in such circumstances, we are entitled to speak under the name of matter?

"The objects around us, then, if they can be known to us at all as objects, do truly *act* on us and on each other, in the only sense in which the word *action* can be understood; that is to say, they are truly, in certain circumstances, the reciprocal and immediate antecedents and consequents in a series of changes: for, if this were not the case, the world, even though there were myriads of substances existing, never could be known to exist, and, as wholly ineffective, could not have been worthy of entering into the gracious plan of Him who has surrounded us everywhere with the countless multitude of living and inanimate influences, which it is delightful to feel and to behold, and still more delightful to trace to that primary Beneficence, in which they all had their common origin."—Pp. 102—108.

If this reasoning be just, as it does appear to be, then it follows that there is no distinction between a *physical* and an *efficient* cause, if physical cause has any meaning.

"The *physical* cause which has been, is, and always will be, followed by a certain change, is the *efficient* cause of that change; or, if it be not the efficient cause of it, it is necessary that a definition of *efficiency* should be given us, which involves more than the certainty of a particular change, as consequent on instant sequence. Causation is ef-

ficiency; and a cause which is not efficient is truly no cause whatever. It is possible, indeed, that what we may have before considered as the physical or efficient cause of a particular phenomenon,—that is to say, its immediate and constant antecedent,—may prove not to have been so; for it is possible that a better analysis of a complex phenomenon may show a series of changes where we had supposed only one. We before considered A as the immediate antecedent of D, but we find afterwards that B and C are interposed; and we cease therefore to regard A as the cause of D, and give that name first perhaps to B, and afterwards on a still nicer analysis to C. But we do not, on account of our minuter discoveries, call A or B the *physical* cause of D, and C its efficient cause. We consider physical and efficient antecedence as exactly of the same meaning, or rather as both superfluous when coupled with the word Cause, that of itself expresses every thing which they can be employed to signify. C is the cause of D; for it has D as its invariable consequent: and whatever verbal distinctions may be made, this is all which we can understand by the term; since no other import is assigned to it, even by those who make verbally the distinctions, to which we strive in vain to attach some accurate notion." Pp. 113—115.

Such, then, are some of the arguments in favour of Dr. Brown's view of the relation between cause

and effect. I have presented them in the train in which they occurred to my own mind, instead of giving a simple abstract of the arguments contained in his work, because the mere abstract of a discussion, without numerous quotations, is seldom satisfactory. I would recommend, however, in the strongest manner, all those who feel an interest in the question, to have recourse themselves to the first chapter of Dr. Brown's work, which may be considered as a perfect model of metaphysical disquisition. In the narrow limits of a single chapter, little more than the materials for arriving at a conclusion could be presented. At the same time, the truth of the position, which I have been endeavouring to defend, appears so incontrovertible, that I cannot help flattering myself, that even this brief outline of the argument will appear satisfactory to every unprejudiced person who chooses to reflect deliberately upon the subject.

In the trains of events that are continually in progress then, while the relation of many antecedents and consequents is merely casual, there are other antecedents that bear to their consequents a relation that is invariable. This latter relation, viz. the relation of a particular antecedent to a change which we believe to be its uniform attendant, is, as I have endeavoured to show, all that we can understand by the word *power*. We see an object in certain circum-

stances, we see a certain change consequent on this, and *we believe* that the object in similar circumstances will always be followed immediately by a similar change. Here the interesting question occurs, Whence does this belief arise? In other words, what is the origin of our idea of power? To this inquiry Dr. Brown has devoted a separate chapter of his work. He shows, in the *first* place, that the belief is in some way or other dependent on experience; and that the relation between cause and effect cannot be discovered *a priori*.—Anticipations of this doctrine, it may be remarked, are to be found in the works of many of the philosophers even of the 17th century; and, indeed, the whole of the inductive logic is founded upon it, though Mr. Hume has certainly the merit of being the first who distinctly stated, and clearly illustrated it.—Dr. Brown's *second* proposition is, that, even after experience, we are incapable of inferring, by any process of reasoning, the relation between cause and effect.—This position also, was very forcibly stated by Mr. Hume; and was received without opposition by all those who were worthy of the name of philosophers, in regard to all the truths in physics, with one very important limitation. This limitation was, in regard to the phenomena of the inertia of matter, the composition of forces, and other instances of a similar description. In regard to this class of facts, it was maintained,

that they were altogether independent of experience, and the laws of thought connected with experience, and were therefore capable of being inferred, before observation, with complete and independent certainty of the result. Dr. Brown has devoted nearly a hundred pages to the discussion of this point, with what success may be judged from this circumstance, that Mr. Playfair* (whom he was understood to have more particularly in his eye in the discussion) professed himself completely convinced by his arguments. Dr. Brown, having triumphantly established that we neither perceive power nor discover it by reasoning, resolves our belief of it into *intuition*, the only source, besides perception and reasoning, of belief. Here it is that Dr. Brown differs from Mr. Hume, who, as is well known, traces the origin of the idea of power to custom.

Such, then, are Dr. Brown's doctrines respecting power. He conceives that it is nothing more than the "relation of a particular antecedent to a change, which we believe to be its uniform attendant." And he conceives, that we believe in

* It was in the last lecture that Mr. Playfair ever delivered, that he gave Dr. Brown the credit of being the first philosopher who had given a full and clear exposition of the nature of causation, and of our ideas respecting it. I may add, that the publication of Dr. Brown's work materially altered Mr. Playfair's opinion of several of the philosophical opinions of Leibnitz, as may be seen in the second part of his dissertation prefixed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

this uniform relation, not from *perceiving* it, "not because we can demonstrate it to ourselves or to others, but because it is impossible for us to disbelieve it. The belief is in every case intuitive."*

To fix what it truly is which constitutes the relation between cause and effect, and to ascertain the circumstances in which the belief of the relation arises in the mind, exhaust all that the subject of causation naturally presents. The illusion, however, which supposes the powers of nature to be something more than the mere antecedents and consequents themselves, has been so universal, that it becomes interesting to inquire into the circumstances that have led to it. Dr. Brown, accordingly, has added a separate chapter, in which he has discovered in the deceptive forms of language, in the nature of the subject, and in the imperfections of our senses, the sources of the mistake that has been so prevalent.

This perhaps is the most valuable part of Dr. Brown's work. To many understandings it will be found to contain the most satisfactory proof of the conclusions that he wished to establish according to the maxim of Coke, that "to trace an error to its fountain head is to refute it."† And

* Inquiry, p. 313.

† The commentary upon this maxim, by Jeremy Bentham, in his Defence of Usury, and by Mr. Stewart, in his Dissertation, is well worthy of attention by every one who takes an interest in the

besides, as Mr. Playfair has very justly observed, "that a method of discovering truth is more valuable than the truths it has already discovered," * so the detection of a source of fallacy is of more value than the refutation of a particular error. "A truth is but half revealed, when it makes us know only that we have been in the wrong: the chief revelation is that which tells us of some principle within us, that rendered the fallacy to us for the time a relative truth. We avoid only one error, in knowing that we have been deceived; but we may avoid many errors in knowing how that one has deceived us." †

The habit of Dr. Brown's mind uniformly led him, when he discovered an error, to trace it to its source in the character or circumstances of the author,—or in its connexion with other parts of his system,—or in the original prejudices of our intellectual nature. To this habit we are indebted for some of the most useful passages in his philosophical works, and its existence throws a strong light upon the conformation of his mind.

The views of Mr. Hume enter so largely into all the inquiries into the subject of causation in latter times, that Dr. Brown has added a fourth

science of logic. I shall make no farther allusion to them at present, as the immediate application of them is more immediately to the science of politics than of metaphysics.

* Dissertation, p. 4.

† Inquiry, 146, 147.

part to his work, in which he enters into an examination of what seems objectionable in the theory of that eminent philosopher, and removes some misconceptions that had been very generally entertained, as to what the doctrines of Mr. Hume, in regard to power, really were.

There are three propositions, for the clear enunciation of which we are indebted to Mr. Hume. 1*st*, That the relation of cause and effect cannot be discovered *a priori*; 2*d*, That even after experience, the relation cannot be discovered by a process of reasoning; and 3*d*, That the relation is an object of belief alone. These propositions, so far as they go, contain what may be considered the established creed of philosophers upon the subject. But to these he has added two other propositions, which, though in accordance with his theory of impressions and ideas, are by no means in accordance with the phenomenon that he introduces them to explain. The first of these propositions is, that the relation between cause and effect is believed to exist between objects only after their customary conjunction is known to us; and the second is, that when two objects have been frequently observed in succession, the mind passes readily from the idea of the one to the idea of the other; from this transition, and from the greater vividness of the idea thus more readily suggested, there arises a belief of the relation of cause and effect between them.

In a very full examination of these two propositions, Dr. Brown has shown that the customary conjunction of events is by no means necessary to our belief of causation; and that from a single sequence, the belief of power often arises with irresistible conviction. And in regard to Mr. Hume's theory of the manner in which our belief arises, Dr. Brown has most satisfactorily shown that it is at variance with every fact connected with this part of our nature.

The whole of this part of Dr. Brown's work is well worthy of perusal. The remarks upon Mr. Hume's talents for metaphysics, and upon the character of his philosophic style, may be numbered among the happiest efforts of the philosophy of criticism, and will always be read with interest by those who delight in the contemplation of the variety of intellectual character.

After the observations that have been made, it cannot be necessary to enter into an examination of a charge brought against Dr. Brown, that he denied that there is such a thing as power, or that we have any idea of efficiency.*

* This charge, though we can scarcely conceive it to have been honestly made by any one who understood Dr. Brown's work, is to be found in more than one of our Journals. And from a very able article in the North American Review, in which the Inquiry is noticed with great approbation, it appears that the charge is not confined to our own country, but has been industriously circulated abroad.

I am convinced, that nothing more is necessary, than to refer the reader to the extracts I have already made from Dr. Brown's work, to show that the charge is entirely without foundation. He does certainly maintain that power is nothing more than invariableness of antecedence; but then, in the course of his work, he states, again and again, in many varied forms of expression, that the very first time we see a sequence of events, we believe that, in all similar circumstances, the same antecedent will be followed by the same consequent; that we believe this by intuition; that it is impossible for us not to believe it. Nay, he says, in express words, that the mind is "*originally led to believe causation in every sequence!*" It is vain to say, if this is Dr. Brown's doctrine, wherein does it differ from what every other writer maintains upon the subject? That has nothing to do with the present question.* That question is, whether he did or did not admit of the existence of power, and of the idea of power? If he did not, then, with all the love I bear his memory, I should rejoice to aid in "the prompt exclusion" of so monstrous a heresy. But believing, as I do, that his views were diametrically opposite; that, while he freed our idea of the relation between cause and effect

* See Note I.

from all the mystery with which, even in the minds of the acutest philosophers, it had been formerly enveloped, he left us all that is necessary for our belief, not merely in the regularity of the laws of nature,* but also for a foundation to the evidences of natural and revealed religion;†—believing this, it is impossible to see his name coupled with that of Hume as the denier of power, without loudly remonstrating against such injustice. He maintains, that we cannot see a spark fall upon gunpowder and the consequent explosion, without believing that a similar event will always be followed by a similar explosion. Now, if it is said that we believe this—that we *intuitively believe it*—that we *cannot but believe it*; then, surely, whatever his theory as to the connexion between the two events may be, the man who maintains the existence of such a belief is treated most unjustly, if he is represented as denying the existence of power. I feel that I would be weakening this part of the argument if I were to dwell upon it a moment longer.

Upon the whole, the Inquiry may be considered as one of the most valuable contributions that has ever been made to philosophical logic. It is pervaded by a truly philosophical spirit, and the me-

* Inquiry, p. 104.

† See his admirable Note in answer to Hume on Miracles,

taphysical subtlety is only equalled by the graces of style by which it is adorned. The extreme abstruseness of the subject will prevent the work from ever being generally popular. But among those who take an interest in those highest speculations of human ingenuity, where the mind returns upon itself, and philosophises upon the principles of its philosophising, it will ever be held in the highest estimation.

It is only by comparing this work with the writings of preceding philosophers upon the same subject, that we can be fully aware of the accession it has made to metaphysical science. By the clearness of his analysis of our belief of power, and of the circumstances in which it is involved, —by distinguishing between the inquiry into the relation, and the inquiry into our feeling of the relation,—by dispelling the illusions that subsisted respecting the distinction between physical and efficient causes under the former—and by establishing the conclusiveness of the evidence of our intuitive feeling of power under the latter, Dr. Brown has given a new character to this most extensive branch of philosophy. He has pointed out the true object of physical inquiry,—determined the limits within which our investigations ought to be confined,—put us upon the method of correcting many false habits of philosophising,—and above all, he has freed this most important sub-

ject from the atheism of casual sequence, and the mysticism of an undiscoverable efficiency.

The style is uniformly perspicuous and elegant, and often rises into splendour. Passages of great eloquence are to be found even in the abstrusest parts of the work. The description of the dependence of all created existence upon the Supreme Being, and of the mysterious nature of the will of that almighty power, *who calls for things that are not and they come,* is of great merit. Indeed, the spirit of theism that pervades the whole volume is in the highest degree attractive and beneficial.

Among the faults of the work may be mentioned a too frequent repetition of the question, and an unnecessary minuteness in some of the statements, which leaves too little for the reader, and produces in many minds the same effect as diffuseness. I know not whether to number it among the excellencies or defects of the work, that the author almost uniformly seeks rather to reduce every opinion to its original principles, than to exhibit the principles he establishes in their varied influences and operations. In a scientific point of view this is unquestionably a very great merit, but I am not sure that something is not thus lost in practical utility.

His analysis of the feeling of the relation is correct, so far as it goes, but it is not perhaps

even now complete. He has pointed out that the feeling arises upon our observing an event. But he has not shown the active properties of this feeling, in prompting us to inquire into the cause. An important chapter therefore still remains respecting the feeling under this aspect, and respecting the degree in which it is possessed by different individuals. The causes of this difference, and its influence upon the character, exhausts the subject.*

Though Dr. Brown has pointed out all the sources of the illusion, that has so generally prevailed, respecting the intervention of something unknown between the cause and its effect, connecting them together in mysterious bondage, he has not sought to enumerate the various sources of the different errors that preceding philosophers had successively fallen into in their inquiries into this difficult subject. There appear to me to be three facts respecting the part of our intellectual nature which makes us acquainted with the subject of power, to one or other of which, the erroneous views that have been most prevalent may be referred. I can afford room only to enumerate them, without entering particularly into an illustration of their influence.

* Some remarks upon the light which the doctrines of Phrenology are calculated to throw upon this subject, will be found in a subsequent part of the volume.

First, As our belief of causation is a state of our own mind, there can be nothing *resembling* it external to the mind;* and, if therefore we attend to what is external in the expectation of discovering the prototype of our own feeling, we shall be infallibly disappointed. The scepticism to which this leads is similar to that which denies that there is sweetness in sugar, virtue in honesty, or beauty in virtue, because in none of these is there any quality resembling our sensation or sentiment. What we ought to seek for in these and similar instances is not a resemblance to our feeling, but a quality or circumstance which is the occasion of it.

Secondly, What we have been accustomed to, we conceive ourselves to understand; and, we imagine that we remove a difficulty, when we discover a resemblance between a phenomenon to be accounted for, and one that is familiar to us, though in reality the latter may be as little understood by us as the former. This has been the source of the unphilosophical attempts so often made to resolve the phenomena of thought into a series of material changes; and in general, of all the hypotheses that have sought to explain the phenomena of nature by the supposed intervention of some substance, whose operations are conceived to be analogous to those of a sub-

* This view of the subject will be explained more fully in a succeeding chapter.

stance already familiar to us. It was this that led Newton to the idea of an invisible ether, Le Sage to his stream of atoms, and Locke into the resolving of all material changes into impulse. The illustration of the influence of the illusion in humbler names would be altogether endless.

The *third* fact to which I alluded in regard to our intellectual faculties, is, that at any time they may be checked in their operation by the excitation of a strong sentiment. When the sentiment is excited and gratified, we feel as if the difficulty were removed, and as if the intellectual faculty also were satisfied. How often do we think our reason is convinced, when it is only our love of the simple, or of the marvellous, or the new, that meets with gratification, or where the subject is of so awful a nature as to prevent inquiry altogether.

The first fact to which I referred has led to all the sceptical views that have been maintained upon the subject, and the first and second, or the first and third, have led to most of the errors of philosophers of sounder theological principles. To the first and second may be traced the doctrines that so long prevailed respecting occult qualities, which were conceived to give an explanation of every phenomenon. Malebranche was the first who clearly pointed out that, in reality, the method of Aristotle affords no explanation whatever. But then the influence of

the third fact I mentioned, was perceptible in leading him into an error equally great; and the piety of this very excellent philosopher made him conceive that he had arrived at the true solution of every difficulty, by ascribing every change to the divine will as its immediate cause. For a time the theory of Malebranche under different names, prevailed among theistical philosophers. Mr. Hume, who did not feel himself restrained by any reverential scruples, boldly examined into the connexion between the will of a creating being and the result, and found that even this relation could not be accounted for by a process of reasoning. The Scotish school of philosophers, who came after Hume, felt the force of his argument; but, not distinguishing between what was dangerous in his doctrines, and what was harmless, or at least not perceiving in what his mistake really consisted, and trembling for the consequences to natural religion, that were supposed to flow from his tenets, assumed a distinction that is not easily intelligible, and sheltered themselves under the mysticism of efficient causes. That the doctrine of efficient causes is essentially the same with that of occasional causes, appears obvious; at least it proceeds from the same feelings and leads to the same erroneous conclusions. The answer to the doctrine seems simple and irresistible, that if no power has been communicated to material objects, and if the will of

the Deity is the immediate cause of every change, then how does their existence make itself known to us, or what beneficial end can we discover in their existence?

These attempts at explanation appear to proceed from not distinguishing between the inquiry into the relation itself and the inquiry into the circumstances in which the feeling of the relation arises in the mind. When this distinction is pointed out, the difficulty seems at once to vanish. There is a feeling of the relation between objects, as causes and effects, that arises upon the perception of certain sequences, different from all other feelings. When we examine into the nature of the relation, however, all that we can say is, that it does excite such a feeling in us. This is surely all that can be said, and of what can be meant by an efficient cause different from this, I am unable to form any idea.

All the prejudices in regard to bodies not operating except where they are, and the theories of gravitation, perception, &c. &c. to which these prejudices have given birth, may be traced to the same source. And, in short, the moment that we attempt to explain *how* events take place, farther than by stating the feelings that they excite within us, we are involved in inextricable difficulties. To seek for a foundation of our belief better than what nature has given us, exposes us to the irresistible attack of the sceptic; and to consider the phenome-

na of nature in reference to one class of our feelings only, without keeping in view the other principles of our intellectual frame, leads us to conclusions destructive of all belief. But happy it is for man, that amidst all his errors, there are, by the wisdom of his Creator, principles of independent feeling in his mind, which save it from the follies of its own ratiocinations. "By these we can believe where there is no argument, and can disbelieve where there is argument, without a single demonstrative imperfection."

The notes at the end of Dr. Brown's work contain much explanatory matter, and are distinguished by the same philosophical spirit that has been remarked in the body of the work. Two very popular questions are treated of in notes E and G; and had these been printed in a separate form they could not have failed to excite a very general interest. They may, indeed, be considered as two essays,—the one on Mr. Hume's doctrine as to Miracles, and the other on Providence.

In his answer to the Essay on Miracles, valuable as every sound theist must conceive it to be, and peculiarly valuable as it must be judged by those who take an interest in the question as to the truth of Revelation, I cannot help thinking, that it may be doubted whether he has fully met Mr. Hume's argument. He has indeed succeeded in detecting *one* of Mr. Hume's sophis-

tries, and perhaps the most subtle and most dangerous; but it may be doubted whether it is the one upon which his adversary placed his chief dependence.* Dr. Brown supposes Mr. Hume's sophism to lurk in his definition of a miracle, as *a violation of the laws of nature*, a violation that consists in this, that while the antecedents remained the same the consequents were different. Dr. Brown allows, that if this definition of a miracle were correct, Mr. Hume's conclusions would be inevitable. But he maintains that the definition is erroneous. The antecedent is not the same, for a special volition of Deity interferes. In a miracle, therefore, there is no *violation* of the laws of nature, but, on the contrary, agreeably to these laws, the antecedent being different, the consequent is different also. Here he argues with irresistible force. But to this argument he confines himself, and does not take any notice of the more popular objections of his antagonist. I may mention, that this was one of the peculiarities of his intellectual conformation. He seized upon one view of

* The different views that have been entertained as to the real nature of Mr. Hume's argument is one of the strongest proofs of the justness of Dr. Brown's criticism as to the great deficiency of precision in his style. The qualities of style at which he aimed, and in which he may be allowed to excel every writer in the English language, are perhaps incompatible with metaphysical precision and accuracy.

a subject and confined himself to it exclusively, often giving too much credit to the logical consistency of his opponent. In this respect his views seem to have been the same with an orator of antiquity, referred to by the younger Pliny. "*Dixit aliquando mihi Regulus cum simul adessemus; tu omnia quae sunt in causa putas exequenda. Ego jugulum statim video, hunc premo.*"*

Mr. Hume certainly does not confine himself to one argument, nor among his different arguments, does it seem to have been his main object to maintain any great degree of logical consistency. He was chiefly anxious to shake our belief in all religion, natural and revealed, and for this end he has recourse to various topics, many of them neither consistent with one another, nor with his doctrines upon other subjects. Dr. Brown, on the other hand, contends for an abstract truth—the possibility of the Almighty interfering with what is called the usual course of nature: and he gives Mr. Hume credit for a consistency that he has no title to, and takes it for granted that he confines himself to the only ground that, upon his own principles, is tenable.

* Plin. Ep. lib, i. In the remaining part of the passage from which this extract is taken, the advantages of this method compared with the more popular practice, is discussed with much elegance and ingenuity.

In Dr. Brown's discussion, the fundamental truth of natural religion is taken for granted—the existence of a God—the Creator of the universe. But this is a truth that Mr. Hume does not admit, or, at least, if he does, it is in a very different sense from that in which Dr. Brown would have been satisfied with it. Into the question as to the possibility, or impossibility of divine interference, he scarcely enters. His is a practical inquiry as to whether any evidence from the testimony of men ought to convince us of any special instance of interference. And from the tendency of man to believe in the marvellous, and various other considerations, he comes to the conclusion, that we are warranted, upon good grounds, at once to reject all evidence that can possibly be brought forward.*

* The argument is thus summed up by him in the following paragraph: "Upon the whole then, it appears that no testimony for any kind of miracle has ever amounted to a probability, much less to a proof; and that even supposing it amounted to a proof, it would be opposed by another proof derived from the very nature of the fact which it would endeavour to establish. It is experience only which gives authority to human testimony, and it is the same experience which assures us of the laws of nature. When, therefore, these two kinds of experience are contrary, we have nothing to do but subtract the one from the other, and embrace an opinion either on one side or the other, with that assurance which arises from the remainder. But, according to the principle here explained, this substraction, with regard to all popular religions, amounts to an entire annihilation; and, therefore, we may establish it as a maxim, that no human testimony can have such force as to

The argument upon which Mr. Hume chiefly rested, is contained in the second part of his Essay, and seems to be as follows:—We cannot believe in any thing without repeated instances of sequence. But so far from there being a uniform connexion between the testimony of individuals and the existence of miracles, the very contrary is the case, "as the violations of truth are more common in the testimony concerning religious miracles, than in that concerning any other matter of fact;" and, therefore, however strong evidence may be offered, in any particular instance, we have here only a single sequence against a multitude altogether opposite.—Now the conclusiveness of

prove a miracle, and make it a just foundation for any such system of religion." Hume's *Essays*, ii. 135, 136.

That Mr. Hume did not rest entirely upon the argument that Dr. Brown ascribes to him, appears from the following extract.—

"Though the Being to whom the miracle is ascribed be in this case Almighty, it does not upon that account become a whit more probable, since it is impossible for us to know the attributes or actions of such a Being otherwise than from the experience which we have of his productions, in the usual course of nature. This still reduces us to past observation, and obliges us to compare the instances of the violation of truth in the testimony of men with those of the violation of the laws of nature by miracles, in order to judge which of them is most likely and probable. As the violations of truth are more common in the testimony concerning religious miracles than in that concerning any other matter of fact; this must diminish very much the authority of the former testimony, and make us form a general resolution never to lend any attention to it, with whatever specious pretence it may be covered."—Hume's *Essays*, ii. 137, 138.

this reasoning after the premises are allowed, depends upon the question whether the evidence in favour of the false miracles to which Mr. Hume alludes is of as satisfactory a nature as the subject admits of. If he had brought forward any instances in which competent witnesses, with no inducement to deceive, had borne testimony to miracles that were afterwards discovered to be false, then there would have been some force in his argument. In this, however, as has been shown by Dr. Campbell, he has altogether failed. And the legitimate conclusion to be drawn from the multitude of impostors and pretended miracles that have been in the world is, not that "human testimony can never have such force as to prove a miracle, and make it a just foundation for a system of religion;" but that we ought to be most scrupulous in sifting the evidence, and in ascertaining that the events cannot be accounted for by natural means.

Besides, it should be remembered, that miracles are only one species of the evidence that we possess in favour of the Christian religion. If miracles were considered, without any regard to the truths of natural religion, and without any regard to the nature of the doctrines they were intended to confirm, there might be much plausibility in Mr. Hume's argument. And it is in leaving these out of view, or rather in giving a false impression of them, that the most dan-

gerous part of his sophistry consists. Nothing can be more dextrous than Mr. Hume's proceeding. He considers miracles apart from all the other corroborating circumstances in their favour, by which means he is enabled to bring forward a show of argument against our belief of them, and then he considers our belief in religion itself as satisfactorily shown to be without foundation. There is no matter of fact whatever, that, by such a process, might not be shown to be unworthy of credit. In many questions the most convincing proof arises not from direct testimony, but from a close chain of corroborative circumstances. It is thus I conceive with the Christian religion. A variety of means of proof is presented us. It is upon the strength of these in connexion, that the truth is to be determined; and we do injustice to our cause when we allow the whole to be decided by the strength of one. We might as well judge of the strength and durability of a temple, after leaving only a single pillar to support it.

In this respect it may be observed, that the adversaries of Christianity have taken an unfair advantage, in considering prophecies and miracles apart. It is a mistake to say, that prophecies are merely miracles; and that, therefore, by the addition of prophecies, we have only a greater number of miracles in evidence of the same thing. Prophecies are indeed only a particular species

of miracles; but the connexion between these in the minute fulfilment that a prophecy finds in a miracle fully attested, and attested in the first place without any supposition that it is a fulfilment of the prophecy, affords a new species of evidence, a species of evidence that to my mind appears stronger than that which arises from either prophecies or miracles considered alone. It is a particular example, under the doctrine of the calculation of chances, where a coincidence may be proved to be impossible without design. If then, so much strength is added by one single prophecy, what a weight of evidence must result from a whole system of prophecies, by different men, relating to different subjects. And if to prophecies we add all the force of the arguments arising from the analogy between natural and revealed religion—from the purity of the doctrines, and the circumstances attendant upon the promulgation of them, we may, upon the general principle laid down by Mr. Hume himself, believe in the truth of Christianity, as there certainly never was any subject where there was such a combination of evidence that was ultimately discovered to be false.

There are many different kinds of evidence in favour of the truth of Christianity, and a new species of evidence arises from the relations that all these mutually bear. This circumstance should not be forgotten by the advocates of our faith. It

is not in prophecies exactly fulfilled, nor in miracles fully attested, nor in purity of doctrine infinitely greater than is elsewhere found; it is not on any one of these singly on which we are called to rest our faith. But it is on the whole taken together, and still more, on the manner in which they are fitted for one another and joined together —the manner in which the different threads are curiously inwoven into one texture—the manner in which the different parts are shapen and grooved, the one to fit the other—and the manner in which the whole are knitted, and rivetted, and mortised into one compact frame. Other religions have, or pretend to have, their miracles—their prophecies—their doctrines, in some measure pure when compared with more degrading superstitions, and they can point to martyrs in their cause. But where is the religion where there are at once prophecies, and miracles, and purity of doctrines, and holy men to preach purity of life, to prophesy, and work miracles; and where these are not distinct but joined together, and the prophecies foretell of the miracles, and the miracles are a fulfilment of the prophecies, and both are in support of heavenly doctrines, and set forth by men whose lives exemplified the precepts that they taught, and who testified by their blood that what they taught and what they witnessed was true?

From this mass of evidence it appears, that, though Mr. Hume's argument were allowed to be conclusive against any religion that had nothing on which to ground its title to reception but the testimony of men that miracles had been wrought in support of it, it would by no means follow that therefore our belief in Christianity must be relinquished. Dr. Campbell, indeed, has proved to a demonstration that the evidence for the miracles performed by our Saviour is infinitely stronger than the evidence in favour of the Heathen or Popish miracles, which Mr. Hume has so ostentatiously brought forward. But supposing that Dr. Campbell had failed in doing this, still the question would have been far from being at an end. A body of evidence, equal in strength to that to which we have referred, must be adduced by the followers of Hume, and proved to have been found false, before his argument can have any weight. And if such a union of evidence were to be discovered false, it would not merely affect the foundations of religion, but would bring down the pillars of belief itself. This was no doubt the object at which this intellectual giant aimed. Indeed, we may observe that the whole of his Essay is directed fully more against the principles of natural than of revealed religion; for what are we to think of a God that has created a world under such circumstances, that it is be-

yond the limits of his power to make it to be believed that he interferes in its government?

In his Essay upon Providence, Dr. Brown has given an example of the cautious and liberal spirit with which one of the nicest and most difficult questions in abstract philosophy and practical piety may be discussed. While he allows the possibility of special interference, he argues, from various grounds that appear conclusive, that it seems improbable that in the ordinary affairs of life there will be an interference. That the whole frame of nature is so admirably arranged, that provision is made for all the possibilities of events, seems agreeable to the wisdom and power of God. At the same time, this can never, in a pious mind, lead to a forgetfulness of providence. It is calculated, on the contrary, rather to cherish a devout frame of mind, in the reference it teaches us in every thing to make, to the wisdom of that great Being, whose providential care extends equally to the common and to the extraordinary, to the great and to the minute, and "whose tender mercies are over *all* his works." Nor does the doctrine prevent a deeper emotion of reverence from arising upon some occasions than upon others. Though the same providence is exercised in directing or witnessing *a hero perish or a sparrow fall*, relatively to us the events are different in the extreme, and the emotions they produce will be proportionally different. The works of all the

six creating days are equally demonstrative of almighty power, but every one must have felt a deeper feeling of adoration, when we are told that *God said, Let there be light, and there was light.* In like manner, in the providence of God, whatever may be our ideas of his special interference, great events and extraordinary afflictions or deliverances are calculated to produce feelings of greater depth and permanence. And in looking abroad through nature, while every devout mind will exclaim with the poet, "My Father made them *all*," the Deity will still be felt as more peculiarly present in the auguster features of creation.

Praesentiorem et conspicimus Deum
Per invias rupes, fera per juga
Clivosque praeruptos, sonantes
Inter aquas, nemorumque noctem.

To atone in some measure for the tediousness of this chapter, I shall here introduce an admirable letter from Mr. Erskine. The concluding paragraph relates to a subject which will afterwards be considered; but the letter will be read with more interest without any omission.

Trombe, 22d December 1819.

MY DEAR BROWN,

IT is only since reaching this beautiful residence, which stands on a promontory of the is-

land of Salsette that juts out into the noble bay of Bombay, and is surrounded by some of the grandest and most picturesque scenery which any country affords, that I have had full leisure to indulge in the rich feast which you provided for me in the third edition of the Inquiry on Cause and Effect. I have enjoyed more moments of quiet and reflection during the ten days I have passed in this solitary retreat, than I have had for ten years past, indeed, I may say since I set foot in India. ——————— very carefully kept the volume nearly a twelvemonth in England, so that it has not been long in my possession. But I do not know if I ought to regret that circumstance, as it has permitted me to peruse it with more uninterrupted attention than I could otherwise have commanded. Your alterations are judicious, and it is now rendered a magnificent monument of your metaphysical genius. It is much improved by your having placed the general enunciation and illustration of your theory in the commencement, and afterwards employing the general principles there established as a test by which to try the opinions and reasonings of Mr. Hume and other philosophers. It is giving the parts their proper place, which the occasional nature of the controversy that originally produced your remarks had deprived them of. Where all is excellent I may, however, be allowed to specify the parts that pleased me most. These were, the simple and

beautiful enunciation and developement of your theory in the first part, which to my uninstructed eyes seems a masterpiece of metaphysical acuteness and accuracy. The application of your principles to settle the terms of the much contested question of miracles, and the sound immovable basis which you clear for receiving the legitimate argumentation on that perplexed subject, are a fine triumph of your powers. I think the question put to rest; and you have done more for Mr. Hume than he could do for himself. Another striking portion of the work is that on the false notions entertained by natural philosophers and mathematicians regarding our ideas of forces, and the vain attempts to demonstrate *a priori* any properties of body. I am convinced, that the impossibility of following the most eminent philosophers in their attempted demonstrations on these points, has impressed many sound heads with a notion that they had not a mathematical understanding, and disgusted them with the study. The famous question of the measure of forces is an eminent proof how necessary sound metaphysical principles are to sound physics. The observations on Bacon and his philosophical principles, though belonging to another class, bear the marks of the same strict acuteness, and struck me as uncommonly judicious, well timed, and solid. They are the result of a wider view of the history and state of public knowledge and feeling in his times,

and in the times that preceded and followed him; as well as of a cooler and more comprehensive analysis of his works and of his habits of thought, than have been taken by any of the illustrious men who have lately united in idolizing him. Let him be worshipped for his divine qualities, but break the molten image that would lead to superstition. Many of the praises given him do not belong to him as himself, but as the representative of a philosophical school, which has taken his works as their banner.

I know no work that presents such a perfect example of philosophical analysis, or of precision of language and thinking, as the Inquiry. Using all the impartiality of which I am master, I consider it as the first perfect work on a metaphysical subject; and as fixing an era in the science to which it belongs, as much as was done by the Principia or the Wealth of Nations. I am glad to observe, that you announce still new works on the subject of Mind. I anticipate them as new triumphs to you and to the science. Since reading this volume, and considering that so much time has elapsed since its appearance, I confess that I feel surprise that it has, as far as I can observe, made so little noise in the public journals and periodical publications. It has a simplicity in its principles that makes it easily understood, and in its consequences, it extends into every department of mental research. However, the delay is of little

moment. The work must force its way, since it contains fundamental and invincible truths, and a year's fame more or less is nothing to a work destined to immortality.

I observe Emily and other Poems announced. I do not know how it is, that your poetry has not had more success, I mean with the people. We must take it as a fact to be accounted for. There are in it the same power of mind, and bursts of the same eloquence, that adorn your other writings. I do not know whether your cautious use of the language, and the fineness to which you have brought it as a philosophical instrument, may not have affected it as a means of exciting poetical emotion. You cut blocks with a razor. The best language of poetry is the popular; that which is linked to our early and habitual feelings. It often expresses masses of objects or feelings rudely thrown together, and fantastically assorted. But I do not think that you have generally done justice to your poetical talents by your subjects. They are often too refined. You had once a grand idea, perhaps it was nothing more, of a poem on Human Life. Try *Old Age* as one part of it, and throw in landscapes, and pictures, and groupes, and comparisons, and flaunting colours, and some homely fireside scenes, and some moral reflections suited to the winter of life for the vulgar, and with one-tenth of your poetic and philosophic powers, you

will make it a poem that will grace every table. But take special care that you bring down your muse from heaven to earth, and let her for some months be a maid of terrestrial feelings. All this may be very impertinent and very erroneous, but it is at any rate a proof of my sincerity and friendship. Mrs. Erskine joins me in kind wishes to you and your sisters. Ever yours,

WM. ERSKINE.

CHAPTER V.

APPOINTMENT TO THE CHAIR OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

It was the good fortune of Dr. Brown to have been always noticed and appreciated by men of the most eminent talents, in every department of science. Having practised as a physician in Edinburgh from the time of receiving his diploma, he was, in 1806, associated in partnership with the late Dr. Gregory, whose name is a sufficient passport to medical distinction. The nature of the duties that thus devolved upon him, and the prospects it opened up, are alluded to in the following letter.

To Mr. Erskine.

8, *North St. David Street,*
Edinburgh, December, 1806.

I am quite mortified, my dear Erskine, at the long, long intervals which take place in our

correspondence. Many months have elapsed since I last wrote to you, and from you I have received but two letters. Yet nowhere does my heart turn more readily, and more anxiously, than to the seat of your banishment; and I flatter myself, that *you too*, like other less voluntary exiles, who think of home with double affection, are often renewing in memory the *walks* and *conversations*, and little events of our early friendship. It is sad that distance, which ought to increase the tendency to epistolary communication, seems rather to diminish it, as if some secret and vile analogy of *time* and *space* were ever present to the mind, and we were constrained by its unaccountable influence to proportion our inquiries, not to the curiosity and anxiety which we feel, but to that facility of supply, which in most cases renders inquiry less necessary.

Since I wrote to you last, and indeed very recently, a most important change has taken place in my medical prospects. Dr. Gregory, whose practice since you left Edinburgh has increased, so as to become quite oppressive and unmanageable without assistance, has had the kindness to select me as his coadjutor. The aid which I give him is at present confined almost entirely to the cases of consultation, sent to him from every part of Britain and Ireland, a sort of practice which is by much the most agreeable in itself, and the most useful in extending reputa-

tion. To such cases as he cannot find time to answer himself, I write an answer after consultation with him, and we subscribe our names in common. Indeed, *if I could but* bring myself to disregard every thing but medical practice, and to estimate happiness by its weight in guineas, I should consider myself as having every chance of being very *happy*, not immediately perhaps, but certainly in fewer years than I could have had reason to expect. The *countenance* and *introduction* of Dr. Gregory, in the very flattering manner in which he has honoured me with it, are worth twenty years of additional age.

I have sent a packet to London, which I hope will reach Horner in time to be forwarded with this letter. It contains my work on Cause and Effect, and some other little tracts on Leslie's affair, of which I gave you so long an account in my last. For the last one you must make great allowance, as from the time which Dr. Inglis artfully chose for his publication, I had but a day or two to compose, copy out, print, and publish my reply. I should wish much to have an opportunity of conversing with you on the subject of the *largest* work. When I look back on the long period that has elapsed since Hume wrote, and on the number of inquirers who have examined his theory, I confess I do feel much astonishment, that no one should before have discovered, that he is not that strange sceptic, as to

the idea of power, which he is uniformly represented to be, and that the theory of Reid is in truth the very same theory as that of Mr. Hume, which, with so much zealous blundering, he professes to confute. The packet which carried my poems to you, conveyed also, I think, a copy of the *first* edition of my observations on the subject; but, as I have enlarged them very much, you must gratify me by reading the *second*. Alas, that you can only *read* them! How much would I give for the benefit of being able to discuss them with you.

Our friend Horner has become a Member of the Parliament that has just met. I have no doubt that he will acquit himself with great credit, though I am half afraid that he may be diverted from the happier honours of his own profession, into the bustle and misery of a political life. But for this one seduction, I am confident that the highest dignities of the bar are speedily awaiting him.

* * * * *

——— was in town a few days ago, quite a venerable *paterfamilias*, very happy, and in very good health. His situation at ———, however, is quite an oppressive one, at least it would be dreadfully oppressive to almost any one but him, with so many incessant and varied distractions. He seems to have done nothing yet in his great work, and indeed it would

be almost absurd in the present state of Europe to write on *the law of nations.* It would be little more than an idle history of past opinions,—or a dissertation on the armies of France, and the fleets of Britain. One's eyes are quite tired with looking on the sad wonders that have flitted before us. What are we yet to see?

Farewell, my dearest Erskine. Believe me, in all the changes and chances of political things,

Your fixed and faithful friend,

THOMAS BROWN.

The circumstances that led to this connection, which was in some respects of a nature rather unusual, were fully explained in a letter which was printed at the time, and put into the hands of Dr. Gregory's patients.* By the friends both of Dr. Gregory and Dr. Brown, the arrangement was viewed with great satisfaction, and to the latter especially, it was considered as equally honourable and advantageous. The following extract from a letter by Mr. Horner, will be read with interest, as showing the kind concern that the subject of this memoir had excited.

"My DEAR BROWN.—I hope you will allow me to congratulate you on the arrangement which Dr. Gregory has made with you. Mrs. Stewart

* See Note K.

has kindly informed me of it, and it gives me the most cordial satisfaction and pleasure.

"I never had fears of you, but about your health; for we have all long ago predicted the eminence of fame, and prosperity you are to reach, and you are now at length put upon the direct road to it, where you have so firm a foot that I look upon you as already in possession. I am going to see Sydney and Mrs. Smith immediately, that we may talk of our pleasure, and of the success of our prophecies."

The letter from which the following is an extract, was written by Dr. Gregory, after he had the fullest opportunity of judging of the character and qualifications of his youthful associate, and when sufficient time had elapsed for the sobering effect of professional intercourse to correct any over-favourable impression that might have been supposed to have its origin in the partialities of private friendship.

"* * * All that I have seen of Dr. Brown in the last fifteen months has tended greatly to confirm and increase the good opinion which I previously entertained of him. If worth, and talents, and learning, and science, can entitle a physician to success, I think Dr. Brown has a fair chance of attaining in due time the highest eminence in his profession." * * *

But success as a physician was not sufficient to satisfy Dr. Brown's ambition, and he would

gladly have preferred the most moderate independence with literary leisure, to all the advantages that the highest professional eminence could confer.

At a very early period of his life his peculiar qualifications and habits pointed him out as eminently fitted to enjoy and adorn an academic life. And in the summer of 1799, when the chair of rhetoric became vacant by the death of Dr. Blair, great exertions were made to procure it for the author of Observations on Darwin's Zoonomia. The means by which these exertions were defeated, are very instructive in the history of academical patronage, and city politics. I have already alluded to the circumstance, that at that time it was the view of "the courtly side" of the church, that every chair in the university, appropriated to letters and general science, should, as it became vacant, be filled up by clergymen of the city of Edinburgh, as often as individuals belonging to that body could be found fitted, "if a minister of Edinburgh on that courtly side can be ill fitted for any professorship that happens to be vacant at the time when his genius for it is in demand."* It is to this circumstance alone that the defeat of Dr. Brown can be ascribed, as the most eminent of the literary characters in Edinburgh came forward with all their influence in his fa-

* From an unpublished pamphlet by Dr. Brown.

vour, and the voice of the public was decidedly along with them. His own view of the matter is contained in the following extracts from one of his letters.

To Miss Brown.

St. Patrick Square, Edinburgh, June 10, 1801.

"My Dear Sister,

If you have not yet seen the Gazette, I pray you borrow of Mr. Thomson, one of his best sermons on the most generally appropriate of all earthly subjects, *disappointment;* and peruse it with as much attention as you would a new novel, before you venture upon another line of my composition; for that line, however rhetorically written, will tell you that I am *not* professor of rhetoric in the university of Edinburgh.

* * * * * * * *

The business upon the whole is as pretty a piece of courtiership as I could well have imagined. The Chief Baron certainly gave it to be understood, not merely to those who made application for me, but even to persons whom he did not suspect to be of my acquaintance, that there was every probability of my obtaining it. He asked M'Kenzie to read my book, with the view of determining its merit, which implied that I was not officially disqualified. He even hinted several times, that it was rather his

wish not to give it to a clergyman, and yet I have now been excluded from all pretension because I am not of that profession, for which before he had no predilection. The truth of the matter is, that Finlayson and the governing churchmen have been able to persuade the Dundases that it is absolutely necessary to secure the interest of *moderation* by throwing out to the hopes of party as many good things as possible, and that the interest of universities should at all times be sacrificed to that of the church. I knew my fate with some degree of certainty many weeks ago. Letters were again sent up to the Chief-Baron from M'Kenzie, Tytler, and Seymour; and Lord W. got a letter in reply, in which, without the least reason assigned for his change, he said he should recommend a clergyman in preference to a layman, and when the Secretary had fixed would write again. He accordingly the other day transmitted to Lord Webb a copy of H. Dundas's letter, which stated in form, that from what the Chief-Baron and Dr. Finlayson had written, he was convinced of the propriety of making the professorship clerical. No allusion was made to me, as being negatively comprehended in the objection of profane laicism. Instead of solid pudding, therefore, I must now content myself with empty praise; for I have at least the consolation of having my name associated with the general indignation at the appoint-

ment. It has besides assured me of active friendship which I could not without the pleasing experience have foreseen. On M'Kenzie I had even no previous claim of acquaintance, and Tytler has acted more like an old friend than a recent acquaintance. Lord Webb in personal applications, in letters, in fatigue, in anxiety, could not have done more for a brother. What Smith was you saw before leaving town. In short, I may be proud of friendship if not of fortune, and to fail with the public wishes of success is in some measure a triumph." * * * *

When the Logic chair became vacant by the death of Dr. Finlayson, an exertion was again made on his behalf. The following is an extract from the letter that was addressed to the Patrons of the University by the late Dr. Gregory upon that occasion.

"* * * If I have been rightly informed with respect to your wishes, it will perhaps be acceptable to your Lordship and all our honoured Patrons, who, I am confident, take a hearty interest in the welfare of the University, when I tell you, that from my own most intimate and certain knowledge I can give the most ample and honourable testimonial in favour of Dr. Thomas Brown, one of the candidates for the vacant professorship.

"Dr. Brown has been long known to me; and I have the highest opinion of his worth, his talents, his learning, his classical taste, his genius, and love for science, and his uncommon proficiency in those branches of general knowledge which are the peculiar province of the Professor of Logic, and are indeed the most useful preliminaries and preparation for the study of almost every particular science, including even Medicine in all its parts." * * *

Besides the influence of his personal friends, Dr. Brown, at this time, was honoured by the support of the late Lord Meadowbank, who hitherto had known him merely by having read his works. Amidst the violent and often unprincipled opposition that Dr. Brown met with, on account of his political sentiments, it would be improper to pass over unnoticed the friendship which he uniformly experienced both from Lord Meadowbank and Lord Woodhouselee.—Learning and genius are of no party; or, at least, the ties of congenial talent are felt to be stronger than all the artificial connections of political life. And it is certainly not the least distinguishing excellency of the liberal arts, that, in accordance with their noble derivative, they *free* the mind of those who are devoted to them from that sordid spirit that would sacrifice the interests of literature and religion to the unworthy purposes of a

servile ambition; making patronage to be considered not as a sacred trust for the benefit of those for whom it is granted, but as a source of personal advantage, or an instrument of party power, and converting situations, upon which the learning or virtue of a nation may depend, into the reward or the bribe for political subserviency. The influence of such a spirit Dr. Brown often experienced; and it is but justice to except the distinguished individuals to whom I have referred.* Upon the present occasion, they exerted themselves with peculiar anxiety. His indisputable superiority as a dialectician seemed to confer upon him the strongest claims to a chair where dialectics form so principal a subject of examination; and the rare union that he was known to exhibit of great powers of metaphysical analysis, and of extensive acquaintance with the physical sciences, seemed to insure his success in enlarging the boundaries of the science of that principle in our nature in which all the other sciences have their origin. Their efforts, however, and those of his other friends were defeated. Ano-

* It is a circumstance *too* honourable to Lord Meadowbank to be passed over in silence, that when Lord Webb Seymour was desirous to introduce Dr. Brown to him, that he might have a better opportunity of judging of his qualifications, he declined it till the election was over. In Dr. Brown's works, he said, he had sufficient proof of his merits, and he would not allow the possibility of it being said that he was influenced in his exertions by any thing but a regard to the interests of the University.

ther was appointed to the chair, and he had to satisfy himself again with the fame of deserving it.

This disappointment in no degree interfered with his devotion to science; and every hour that was not employed in business was dedicated to learning. In the mean time, his name gradually became more known, and he was now generally considered as among the most distinguished of those who supported the high character of our northern metropolis for literature and genius. In continuing in the practice of physic along with Dr. Gregory, his reputation as a physician also rapidly increased, but without any increase of partiality on his part for a laborious profession, whose frequent and agitating interruptions were found to be unfavourable to close and continuous thought. The discharge of his duties was marked by that assiduous tenderness of attention which might have been expected from a disposition so truly amiable; but still philosophy was his passion, from which he felt it as a misfortune that his duty should so much estrange him.

The period, however, at last approached, when he was to be elevated to a situation suited to his tastes and his habits, and where his public duties corresponded with his inclinations. Mr. Stewart, in consequence of the gradual decline of his health, being frequently prevented from attending to the duties of his class, found it neces-

sary to have recourse to some of his friends to supply his place during his temporary absence. In general, it is very easy for a Professor to find a substitute. Nothing more is necessary than that the manuscript lecture should be committed to a friend, by whom it is read to the class. In Mr. Stewart's case, however, it was otherwise. His habits of composition, the numerous transpositions that were to be found in his pages, and the many illustrations of which he sketched merely the outline, trusting the filling up to his extemporaneous powers of discourse, rendered his papers in a great measure useless in any hands but his own. In this difficulty he applied to Dr. Brown, who undertook the arduous task of supplying his place with lectures of his own composition. He first appeared in the Moral Philosophy Class in the winter of 1808–9. At this time, however, there was no great call for his exertions, as Mr. Stewart was soon able to resume his public duties.

In the following winter, Mr. Stewart had again recourse to his assistance; after the Christmas holidays Dr. Brown presented himself before the class, and, as an apology for appearing there, read the following letter.

To Dr. Brown.

Kinneil House, Borrowstoness,
30th December, 1809.

My Dear Sir,

As the state of my health at present makes it impossible for me to resume my lectures on Wednesday next, I must again have recourse to your friendly assistance, in supplying my place for a short time. *Two* lectures, or at the utmost *three* in the week will, I think, be sufficient during my absence; and I should wish (if equally agreeable to you) that you would confine yourself chiefly to the *intellectual powers of man*; a part of the course which I was led to pass over this season, in hopes of being able, by contracting my plan, to do more justice to the appropriate doctrines of Ethics. On this last subject I had accordingly entered a few days before the vacation; and it is my intention to prosecute it as soon as I shall find myself in a condition to return.

I shall be anxious till I hear from you in reply to this letter, and am,

My Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

Dugald Stewart.

At this period the course of my studies had brought me to Mr. Stewart's class, and I trust I

may be excused for mentioning, that this was the first time that I had the pleasure of seeing Dr. Brown. With his character I was well acquainted, but the first time I saw him was when he was reading the preceding letter. I shall certainly never forget his appearance, or the reception he met with. The eloquent panegyric he pronounced upon Mr. Stewart, and the unaffected modesty with which he announced his intention of coming forward with three lectures in the week, had already secured the attention of his hearers, and prepared them for all the ingenuity and eloquence of his introductory discourse. The expectations that were excited by his first appearance were more than equalled by the marvellous display of profound and original thought, of copious reading, of matchless ingenuity, and of great powers of eloquence which were displayed in his succeeding lectures. His elocution also attracted much notice. It was observed in the first chapter, that nature had led him to delight in recitation; and in the English academies, by frequent recitations of select passages in prose and verse, he was trained up to that command of voice and correctness of pronunciation which now obtained for him so decided a superiority in our Scotish University.*

* The description that D'Alembert gives of the elocution of La Motte may, with some slight changes, be applied in the case of Dr.

The classical finish to which he was able in so brief a period to bring his lectures, must no doubt have added greatly to the enthusiastic admiration that day after day was exhibited, and which was beyond any thing of the kind that I can recollect. The Moral Philosophy class at this period presented a very striking aspect. It was not a crowd of youthful students led away in the ignorant enthusiasm of the moment; distinguished members of the bench, of the bar, and of the pulpit, were daily present to witness the powers of this living philosopher. Some of the most eminent of the

Brown. I shall transcribe the whole passage, though at the commencement the parallel does not hold. "Ses Discours Académiques obtinrent surtout les plus grands applaudissemens. Il est vrai qu'ils en ont été redevable non seulement à leur mérite réel, mais à un autre talent de l'auteur, qu'il seroit injuste de passer sous silence. Personne ne lisoit, ou plutôt ne récitoit (car on sait qu'il étoit aveugle) d'une manière plus séduisante, glissant rapidement et à petit bruit sur les endroits foibles; appuyant avec intelligence, quoique sans affectation, sur les traits les plus heureux; mettant enfin dans sa lecture cette espèce de ponctuation délicate, qui fait sentir les differens genres de mérite par des inflexions aussi fines que variées; mais surtout évitant avec le plus grand soin cette emphase qui révolte l'auditeur en voulant forcer son suffrage, et qui manque son effet en cherchant à l'augmenter."—*Histoire de Membres, &c.* i. 215.

I may here mention that to aid him in his emphasis he usually drew a line below those words to which he wished particular effect to be given. These words are printed in Italics in the first edition of his Lectures, which gives the work an unusual appearance; but to those who attended his class it will not be disagreeable.

professors were to be seen mixing with the students, and Mr. Playfair, in particular, was present at almost every lecture. The originality, and depth, and eloquence of the lectures, was the subject of general conversation, and had a very marked effect upon the young men attending the university, in leading them to metaphysical speculations.

The testimony he received of public admiration was complete. Dr. Brown has said, and no one who knew the benevolence of his nature could doubt that it was true, that he valued praise less on its own account than on account of the pleasure it gave to those whom he loved, and this unselfish vanity must at this period have received the fullest gratification. In the following letter the reader will discover the same hand that drew so correct and elegant a character of Dr. Brown's poetry in a former chapter. "I need not tell you how we have enjoyed all the fame you have acquired. I am sure you would feel doubly from the happiness you knew it would afford us. To think of the delight your mother and sisters would experience, has often soothed me when I could find no other cheerful idea to rest on. * * * I enjoy nothing so much in the prospect of going to Edinburgh as hearing the fine things about your appearances, which even the wicked are forced to rave about. Here we heard of them only from

those who enjoyed them; but I like to see bad people in the agony of giving *extorted* admiration."

Upon its being announced that Mr. Stewart was to resume his lectures, a meeting of the class was held, when it was resolved that a committee should be appointed to draw up an address, congratulating that illustrious philosopher upon the recovery of his health, and expressing at the same time the feelings of admiration that had been excited by the labours of his substitute. The committee was composed of individuals distinguished for their rank and talents, many of whom are well known to the public. Lord John Russel, who has since distinguished himself in political life, and by his literary productions secured for his name no humble place in the brief list of noble authors, was the chairman of the committee, and at the conclusion of the first lecture that Mr. Stewart delivered upon his return, he presented him with the following address:—

To Dugald Stewart, Esq.

Edin. College, 1st March, 1810.

Sir,—We have had the honour of being deputed, by a very numerous meeting of the students of Moral Philosophy, in the present session

of College, to express to you, in the warmest terms, their unfeigned satisfaction on seeing you resume your public station. They long witnessed, with a painful interest, your generous struggle in a very delicate state of health, to continue the discharge of your fatiguing duties. They could not contemplate these exertions, which you supported with an amiable disregard both of your convenience and safety, without being desirous of offering some expression of their gratitude for so great a sacrifice. They recognise the same zealous anxiety that has constantly marked your academical labours in the selection of a person to fill your chair during your late absence.

Equally impressed with a sense of the merits of Dr. Brown, and of the extent of their obligations to him, the students of Moral Philosophy request that you will allow them to make you the medium of conveying to him their warmest acknowledgments for the instruction afforded them by his admirable lectures. These, though delivered with very little preparation, afford a happy earnest of the advancement of intellectual science, when innvestigated with the acuteness, and enriched by the ample stores of his powerful mind. His ability in the execution of a task so arduous in itself, and undertaken in circumstances of great and acknowledged difficulty, commands equally our respect and admiration.

Permit us then, Sir, to request that you will convey these, the sentiments of your class, to Dr. Brown; and that you will yourself accept of the sincere expression of gratitude, as a testimony, however feeble and inadequate, of their affectionate attachment.

J. RUSSEL.
CALTHORPE.
A. COCHRANE.
G. A. STEWART.
THOS. FRANCIS KENNEDY.
H. HOLLAND.
WILIAM FITTON.

The public display of Dr. Brown's talents so overwhelmingly established his character and pretensions to the chair, that when Mr. Stewart signified a desire to have him united with himself in the professorship, although opposition was at one time threatened, it was but feebly exerted. At the same time, great efforts were deemed necessary by the friends of Dr. Brown, and great efforts were made. Mr. Stewart himself used all the influence that the lustre he had for so many years shed upon the University rendered so great. With an anxiety for the interests of philosophy and the character of his chair highly honourable, he submitted, I believe, personally to solicit the support of every mem-

ber in the Town Council in favour of his friend. Many letters were addressed to the patrons of the University, by individuals of the highest eminence, bearing the strongest and most unequivocal testimony to the merits of Dr. Brown. Of these letters, three may be considered as peculiarly valuable, and well worthy of being preserved. Considering by whom, and upon what occasion they were written, they will be perused with very different feelings from those that are excited by the indiscriminate panegyrics to be found in the commendatory testimonials of ordinary minds. It may be doubted which of them is most honourable to Dr. Brown,—the cautious and guarded panegyric of Mr. Playfair,—the open and warm eulogium of Dr. Gregory,—or the discriminating delineation of Lord Meadowbank.

DR. GREGORY to MR. K. MACKENZIE.

St. Andrew's Square,
Tuesday Morning, 1st May, 1810.

SIR,—As every thing relating to the University of Edinburgh comes peculiarly under your care, in consequence of your being elected to the honourable station which you hold among the Magistrates of this city,* I cannot resist the temp-

* College Baillie.

tation of addressing you on the present occasion, which I conceive to be deeply interesting to the University, and to the community at large.

My old and valued friend, Mr. Professor Stewart, in consequence of the impaired state of his health, is now about to withdraw from those academical duties, which, for the greater part of a long life, he has uniformly discharged with the highest honour to himself, and advantage to the University and to the public.

The loss of such an able and meritorious Professor must be severely felt and long lamented; and the honourable patrons of the University, with their usual and well-known public spirit, will surely be zealous to appoint a successor to Mr. Stewart, not unworthy of him and of the University.

One Gentleman, Dr. Thomas Brown, who is a candidate for that honourable and important office, has been long and intimately known to me; and I can, with perfect sincerity and confidence, give my strongest testimony and recommendation of him, as a man of the highest talents, and greatest literary attainments, and withal, as a man of the most perfect worth that I have ever known; nor do I scruple to say, that I do not believe there is in this country a man more worthy to succeed Mr. Stewart, or more likely to sustain and to extend the high reputation of the Univer-

sity of Edinburgh as a place of general education.

Dr. Brown's talents, and his uncommon attainments in literature and science, even in early youth, and at the same time, his good religious and moral principles were made known, by a publication of his, in answer to Dr. Darwin's Zoonomia, many years ago. His peculiar and most happy talents, as a perspicuous and eloquent lecturer, are equally well known, in consequence of his having often lectured for Mr. Professor Stewart, when the infirm state of Mr. Stewart's health made it impossible for him to lecture himself. On those occasions the lectures of Dr. Brown were most acceptable to the students, and were esteemed by them as scarce inferior to the lectures of Mr. Stewart. Of their sentiments, with respect to Dr. Brown, as well as of Mr. Stewart, they gave, a few months ago, a most honourable testimonial, in a letter which they addressed to Mr. Stewart, on occasion of his resuming his academical duties, after an interruption of many weeks on account of the infirm state of his health. Of this letter I take the liberty to inclose you a copy, which you are welcome to show to any person that you please.

But the most complete and honourable testimonial in favour of Dr. Brown is, that he has long enjoyed the esteem and friendship, and that,

on the present occasion, he has the good wishes and most hearty recommendation of Mr. Stewart; which I am sure he never could have had from Mr. Stewart, any more than from me, on any other principle but that of our being convinced that he is a man of superior merit, who would be a valuable acquisition to the University.

Mr. Stewart and I are contemporaries; both of us have belonged to the University of Edinburgh for more than forty years; both of us have been Professors in it for near forty years; and both of us take a most hearty interest in its honour and welfare.

You will perhaps wonder, that Dr. Brown, who has been bred a physician, and who has the fairest prospect, that any man of his age can have, of being in due time at the head of his profession in this city, should choose to renounce all those prospects for an object, which, in point of pecuniary emolument, must be much less. I could not have advised him to do so; nay, I seriously advised him against it. But such is his taste and choice. Though physic has been his business, literature and philosophy, especially the philosophy of the human mind, have been his amusement, his pleasure, and his favourite study; and have greater charms to him than all the wealth that ever was acquired by the practice of physic.

May I hope that the importance of this business, and the honest interest which I take in the prosperity of the University of Edinburgh, will be some excuse for this unmerciful intrusion on your time and patience?

I have the honour to be,

SIR,

Your most obedient servant,

JAMES GREGORY.

LORD MEADOWBANK to MR. K. MACKENZIE.

Edinburgh, 1st May, 1810.

SIR,—I UNDERSTAND it is now in contemplation to appoint a professor for the chair of Moral Philosophy in the university of Edinburgh; and, when the Honourable Patrons consider the high reputation to which that chair has been raised, and the eminence which, for the last seventy years, has belonged to Scotland in Metaphysical Science, they must be sensible that no appointment could form an object of greater interest with the men of letters of this country. On this account I flatter myself with experiencing their indulgence in presuming to trouble them with a few words on a subject, where the favourite studies of my youth, and my attention and habits through life, have rendered me, as I conceive,

competent to form a judgment with some degree of confidence.

And I beg leave to lay it down as certain, that only a mind of very singular powers, habits, and accomplishments, is fitted to treat successfully the subjects which enter into the course of Moral Philosophy. It is not enough to have studied attentively the best writers upon them, and to be a person of judgment, worth, and literary talent and taste. There must be a peculiar aptitude of intellect, suited to the extreme subtilty of the subject, and united with an inventive vigour of thought, to form a successful teacher. Other sciences may be well taught by persons competent only to describe what is already known, though unable to add to the hoard of knowledge. But, in the present state of this singular science, without a genius fitted to extend its boundaries, and that of a very superior and peculiar character, no person ever gave a course of Moral Philosophy fitted to enlighten and animate the student. If the lectures are not warmed by the powers of original thinking, they are incurably languid and vapid, or at best descend to be little better than vehicles of amusement, filled with detached observations and pleasing illustrations.

Under these impressions, the appearance of Dr. Thomas Brown as a candidate has given me the greatest pleasure. I have heard several of the lectures which he read this last winter and

the preceding, when Mr. Stewart was indisposed; and I will venture to affirm that they were productions of a mind of the first order, of profound, original, clear, and extensive views, stored with well-digested study, and adorned with whatever inexhaustible fancy and exquisite taste can furnish, to render the most abstract of the sciences intelligible, pleasing, and attractive to the opening minds of youth. Such endowments are rarely to be met with. They must, in the natural course of things, bring Dr. Brown forward to the foremost situation in any profession. And if his exertions, in the vigour and inventive period of life, are secured by the patrons to the chair of morals, I shall look forward with the utmost confidence, not only to a still increased celebrity being there speedily acquired, but to a real and effective progress being achieved, in this fundamental science, which will confer new honours on our country, and incalculable benefits on mankind.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

and very faithful servant,

ALLAN MACONOCHIE.

South Castle Street.

MR. PLAYFAIR to MR. K. MACKENZIE.

SIR,—I understand that Professor Stewart's resignation of his office is about to be laid before the Patrons of the university, and the important consequences that must follow that step induce me to address myself to you, as the Magistrate most immediately concerned. I do so indeed, not on account of any doubt I entertain of the liberal and disinterested views by which you and the other Magistrates are actuated, but because on such an occasion as this, in a matter so big with important consequences, either of good or evil to the body to which I have the honour to belong, I feel it a duty to contribute whatever share of *information* may be in my power.

It is evident that the only way of averting the evil that threatens the university, by the resignation of so valuable and so illustrious a member, is his re-election jointly with one qualified to discharge the duties of the office, and at the same time in doing so, likely to co-operate cordially with Mr. Stewart.

It is needless to remark, that Dr. Brown is a person possessing these requisites in the most eminent degree. The great impression made by his lectures when he assisted Mr. Stewart during his ill health last winter, and the general admiration they excited, are well known to you;

an important document on that subject has, I believe, been submitted to most of the members of the Town-Council; and I must beg leave, having been present at most of Dr. Brown's lectures, to add my testimony, both as to the great pleasure I received from them, and as to the effect which they produced on the whole of his audience; an effect that I found was not confined to the moment, but was augmented by reflection. Indeed, to state this to you, from my own knowledge and observation, is the principal motive of my now addressing myself to you, and through you to the other Patrons of the university.

I beg leave to add, that no personal considerations whatsoever, that no views of private advantage to myself, or to the most highly valued of my friends, would induce me to open my lips or to address a single line to you on the present occasion; and that I am influenced solely by my anxiety for the prosperity of the College, and for the maintaining that high reputation to which Mr. Stewart's labours have so materially contributed.

Give me leave to add, that I am,
with high respect,
Your obedient servant,
JOHN PLAYFAIR.

The success of these and other applications was announced, for the first time, in the following let-

ter to Dr. Gregory, which it would be an injustice to the memory of that individual, and to the character of the individuals who at that time composed the Town-Council, to withhold.

MR. MACKENZIE, to Dr. GREGORY.

Edinburgh, 2d May, 1810.

SIR,—It must afford to you particular pleasure, from the great interest that you have taken in Dr. Thomas Brown's prosperity, to be informed that the Council have this day re-elected Mr. Professor Stewart, and conjoined him as his colleague in the election.

I cannot omit the present opportunity which presents itself, of mentioning, that the letter you did me the honour of addressing to me, as College Baillie, in favour of Dr. Brown, was of the highest consequence to that gentleman's interest; the signature itself being equal to a phalanx of recommendation.

I beg your assurance of being, with great respect,

SIR,

Your most obedient and very humble servant,

KINCAID MACKENZIE.

Dr. Brown always considered himself as very much indebted to Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Trotter for the interest they took in his views; and certainly there are few individuals to whose liberal and discerning patronage the city of Edinburgh has been under greater obligations.

Upon his appointment to the Moral Philosophy chair, Dr. Brown received many letters of congratulation. It is pleasing to find his illustrious friend Mr. Horner following him through all the steps of his advancement, and amidst the flattering prospects that were opening to himself, not forgetting his former friendships, or in any degree losing his concern for the interests of literature in his native country.

To Dr. Brown.

Lincoln's Inn, May 8, 1810.

My Dear Brown,

Lord Webb has done me the kindness to give me the news of your appointment as assistant and successor to Mr. Stewart. Upon any occasion of private advantage only to yourself, I need not assure you how sincerely I should rejoice at your good fortune and welfare. But in this event one has the pleasure to find every public as well as private wish gratified. I am made happy by it on Mr. Stewart's account, who felt so natural

an anxiety that the fate of his favourite science and the reputation of his chair should be maintained by no unworthy successor. I am happy for your sake, that you are enabled to devote your life to the pursuits in which you have most pleasure, and in which you have a long course before you of fame and discovery and good to mankind. But what, you will allow me to say, gives me more pleasure than any other consideration, is to see the university, and through it the interests of philosophical opinion in Scotland, rescued from the danger which seemed to threaten them with complete ruin, of the chair of Moral Philosophy being filled by one of those political priests who have already brought such disgrace upon the university, and done so much injury to learning. In your hands, all those great interests are not only safe, but sure of advancement. Believe me, therefore, it is with no common feelings of satisfaction and exultation that I congratulate you on this appointment. I am ever, my dear Brown,

Most faithfuly yours,

FRA. HORNER.

The language employed by Mr. Horner in the conclusion of this letter is certainly strong, though not stronger, perhaps, than the circumstances of the case might justify; and it was chiefly under this aspect that the appointment gave general

satisfaction to the friends of science in Scotland. By many of the friends of religion also, even of those whose sentiments upon some points differed from those of Dr. Brown, his elevation was rejoiced in as a step towards the termination of that system which made the advancement of the clergy depend upon their political sentiments,—a system which is not more unfavourable to the interests of science than to those of religion. Whatever connects the ecclesiastical body, or any portion of it, with a party in the state, from interested considerations, is always to be lamented. Every member of an enlightened community may, indeed, be supposed to devote some portion of attention to the relative advantages of different forms of government; to the expediency of legislative contrivances for the happiness and defence of nations; and to the measures resorted to in their own country in particular emergencies. But the clergy ought habitually to have a higher object in view than any which can be attained by the ordinary measures of human policy. Their business is to inspire those sentiments of religion and humanity which naturally lead to wise and humane enactments, and which alone can make even the wisest institutions permanently beneficial. Whatever is calculated to bring down the ecclesiastical body from this high ground cannot fail to be injurious; and nothing can be more melancholy than to see those whose aim it

ought to be to spread abroad that spirit which would allay all animosities, themselves exhibiting them in their most debasing form. The fatal effects of this have often been felt in our parishes and universities, and every sincere lover of his country will rejoice in every symptom of such a spirit being brought to an end.

Immediately after his appointment, Dr. Brown retired to the country, where he remained till within six weeks of the meeting of the College. He judged that air and exercise might strengthen him for the labours of the winter; and, from the experience of the former year, he had sufficient confidence in his own powers to be assured that he could prepare his Lectures upon the spur of the occasion. Accordingly, when the College opened, except the Lectures that were written during Mr. Stewart's absence, he had no other preparation in writing. But in his extensive reading, his thorough acquaintance with the science, a copious imagination, great powers of language, with good health and spirits, and the stimulus of an enlightened audience, he had the best of all preparations. From a mind of such a conformation, and in a state of such culture, what is called forth in the excitement of the hour, has certainly far more spirit, and generally as much correctness as the careful and plodding products of timid mediocrity.

He seldom began to prepare any of his lectures till the evening of the day before it was delivered. His labours generally commenced immediately after tea, and he continued at his desk till two, and often till three in the morning. After the repose of a few hours, he resumed his pen, and continued writing often till he heard the hour of twelve, when he hurried off to deliver what he had written. When his lecture was over, if the day was favourable, he generally took a walk, or employed his time in light reading, till his favourite beverage restored him again to a capacity for exertion.

His exertions during the whole of the winter were uncommonly great; and, with his delicate frame, it is surprising that he did not sink altogether under them. For several nights he was prevented from ever being in bed; and, upon one occasion, he did not begin his lecture till one o'clock on the morning of the day on which it was to be delivered. He had been engaged in entertaining a numerous company of literary friends, and it was upon their departure that he commenced his studies. The lecture* contains a theory of avarice; and though I cannot agree in his general doctrine, but conceive that the desire of property is as truly an original part of our na-

* Lecture LXIX.

ture as the desire of power, or of any of those pleasures into which he so ingeniously endeavours to resolve it, I think it must be allowed to contain much valuable truth, and to bear no marks whatever of the rapidity with which it was composed. The subject of many of his lectures he had never reflected upon till he took up his pen, and many of his theories occurred to him during the period of composition. He never, indeed, at any time, wrote upon any subject without new thoughts, and these often the best, starting up in his mind.

To those who take an interest in the variety of intellectual character, these circumstances will be of a deeper interest than that which arises merely from the proof they convey of the rapidity of his powers of execution. They serve to illustrate a peculiarity of intellect, where the comprehensive energy is so great, that the utmost diversity and novelty of subordinate and particular disquisitions are all kept in complete unison with the general design.

The following extract from a letter to Mr. Erskine, written after the close of the session, will be read with much interest.

Edinburgh, April 17, 1811.

"My Dearest Erskine,

It has been one of my chief regrets, during this *dreadful* winter, that I had not even as many

moments to spare as would allow me to converse with you in this epistolary way, which seems to be the only way in which we are, for some years at least, to converse. Your marriage has made me happy in every respect but *this one*, that it of course detains you longer from Europe; and if I could quarrel with Mrs. E. *for any thing*, it would be for the share which she has had in this extension of the period of your exile. But she is to make up for it in part, by rendering your exile so much more agreeable than *home* would have been without her, that even your friends, who are *longing* to see you again, are to submit with *patience*. I wish only that you had both philosophy enough, to be content to be *happy* without some of those things which constitute *happiness* in your vile eastern *definition* of the word. Pray, come back, without the folly of waiting for half of that which a Governor-General, in his moderation, would count a *competence*.

If I remember rightly, when I last wrote to you, I had just got the appointment to the chair. With my abominable procrastination, I suffered the remaining summer months to pass away *idly*; and the winter which followed was what you may well suppose a *fag* from morning till night. For six or seven weeks of the latter part of the course, I had to compose every day the lecture of the ensuing day; and I believe, after all, that these lectures were among the best I gave. *Necessity* is

truly, in more senses than one, the *mother of invention*, as much when the necessity arises from mere *shortness of time*, as when it is the *venter*, which is the *Magister artis ingeníque largitor*. What would I not have given to have had *you* here to consult on all those subjects which I had to treat. I was very much *constrained*, as you may believe, by the unpleasantness of differing so essentially from Mr. Stewart, on many of the principal points. But I conceived that it would be more honourable to state at once my own opinions, than to seem to introduce them afterwards in other years; and *Dr. Reid's* name fortunately served every purpose, when I had opinions to oppose in which Mr. Stewart perhaps coincided. I got off, therefore, pretty well in that way; though I must confess that it was one of the most unpleasant circumstances attending my situation. Upon the whole, however, notwithstanding the labour of preparing a *first course* of lectures, and the disagreeable circumstance, to which I have now alluded, the winter was *very bearable*; the attention and kindness of the young men making up for a great deal of irksomeness; and I look forward now, to exertions that must be *agreeable* rather than disagreeable. The subjects comprehended in my course are so various, that I can scarcely take up a book which does not in some degree relate to them; and it is pleasant to have

something which can always turn one's reading to account. I was a little afraid of my *health*, with such a fatigue before me. But it stood the fatigue most nobly; and I scarcely feel myself worse now than I was in the beginning of winter."

It gives an additional value to the printed lectures to know, (and there is the most satisfactory evidence upon the subject,) that nearly the whole of the lectures that are contained in the first three volumes, were written during the first year of his Professorship, and the whole of the remaining lectures in the following season.*

In going over his lectures the following year, his own surprise was great, to find that he could make but little improvement upon them. He could account for it in no other way but by his mind having been in a state of very powerful excitement. As he continued to read the same lectures till the time of his death, they were printed from his manuscript exactly as he wrote them, without addition or retrenchment.† The manuscript contains numerous interlineations; sometimes even four lines are to be found between those which were

* See Note L.

† The addition of titles, and of a few notes of reference, was the only liberty taken on the part of the publishers.

originally written, though these were not at a considerable distance. Notwithstanding this, they are written with such distinctness, that it is believed that after much care and attention the second edition is printed almost *literatim et verbatim*.—It may now be the proper time to pause in our narrative, and to give some account of the system of philosophy which these lectures contain.

CHAPTER VI.

LECTURES ON THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND.

DR. BROWN considers the Philosophy of the Human Mind as comprehensive of many sciences. And in his Introductory Lecture, he announces the examination of the *Physiology of the Mind, Ethics, Political Economy,* and *Natural Theology,* as forming the appropriate business of his chair. His course consisted of a hundred lectures, which fill four large and closely printed volumes. Of a work so extensive, it would be obviously impossible to give an analysis that could be interesting, or even intelligible, within any reasonable compass. In this chapter, therefore, I shall confine my observations to the first of his divisions. And even upon it, I must satisfy myself with endeavouring to convey an idea of the principles upon which he conducted his investigations, and

of some of the more valuable additions which he made to that branch of philosophy.

The first great division of Dr. Brown's course is stated by him to be purely physiological, having for its object the mind considered as susceptible of various states and affections. As all physical science, whatever may be the objects to which it is directed, consists in the comparison of phenomena, and the discovery of their agreement, or disagreement, or order of succession; it is obvious that the examination of mental states and affections, simply as such, may be considered as a branch of general physics. From the common relation, under which the mental and material universe may be considered as presenting phenomena to be examined and arranged, it follows that the same great principles of philosophising that guide our inquiries in the one case must guide them in the other. To have a distinct conception, therefore, of the object we have in view in our inquiries in regard to matter, is not merely interesting in itself, but is calculated to give us clearer ideas with regard to the philosophy of mind.

Upon this most important subject, the following I trust will be found to be a correct analysis of Dr. Brown's views.

The object of all physical inquiry in regard to the material universe, is either *the composition of bodies*, or the sequence of changes by which they

are made known to us as *causes and effects.* In the one case we endeavour to discover what the separate elementary bodies are in any aggregate before us; in the other case we endeavour to discover what new appearances they exhibit in all the variety of circumstances in which they may be placed. Into one or other of these every philosophical inquiry may be resolved, the composition of bodies, and their powers, or susceptibilities.

The *first* object of physical inquiry is the composition of bodies. Every body, however simple and uniform it may appear, is in reality composed of a multitude of particles, each having a separate and independent existence. From the imperfection of our senses, we are incapable of perceiving these atoms in their elementary state. A congeries of them is necessary before we can be made sensible of their presence; and as the lines of space that intervene between the different corpuscles of this congeries, are imperceptible to us, they appear to us to be one simple object. But though in relation to our mode of perception an object may be called one, it is merely in relation to our faculties. In itself it is not one, but many, all having a distinct existence. By various processes we may separate into different parts, a body that seems to us to possess the most perfect unity, thus making the separate existence of these parts obvious to sense.

But in doing this, whether it be by a chemical or by a mechanical process, we make no essential change upon the particles themselves. No new particle is created, no particle is annihilated, no particle has lost its identity. All that is effected is a change of position; by this change the independent existence of the separate parts is made apparent to sense, which separate existence would with finer perceptions have been observed without any change. To take for example a piece of glass, nothing can appear to us more simple and uniform. By a chemical process, however, we discover that in reality it is not simple, but consists of two different substances. But the chemical process has made no change upon the particles of the alkali, or of the silex, except that it has separated them to a distance, which is perceptible to our sensual organs. The particles existed in too minute and intimate union to be observed by us as different. But still they were different, and would with finer perceptive powers have been observed to be different. This is the case with many other aggregates. Their particles exist together undistinguishably blended at invisible distances. And one great object of physical inquiry is, to ascertain what these different particles are. For this purpose we avail ourselves of many processes of chemical analysis to separate those atoms, or congeries of atoms,

that to our imperfect vision appear to form one continuous body.

The *second* object of physical inquiry is the new appearances that any object assumes, or occasions in the various circumstances in which it may be placed. Were our senses of a more delicate conformation, the former object of philosophical inquiry would be superseded, for the separate parts of which every body is composed, would be immediately perceived without the labour of investigation. But the relation that the states of any object bear, in the order of time, to its own varying states, or to other bodies, no delicacy of sensual organization could inform us of. Sensation is limited to what is at present addressed to the organs of sense, and gives us no information different from, or beyond the mere present. Neither does reason give us any aid. There is nothing in the sensible properties of glass that could enable us *a priori* to prove that it is soluble in fluoric acid, more than in any other liquid, or that it will transmit a ray of light, making a certain change upon its direction. In order to know all the changes of which a body is susceptible, or which it may produce, we must witness it in relation to those other bodies. When we have thus witnessed it, an original principle of our nature leads us to believe, that what we then see take place will always again

take place in similar circumstances. And we speak of its susceptibilities and powers, using these terms as briefly expressive of the varied relations in which it may be placed.

When we know the parts of which a body is composed, and the various changes it undergoes, or occasions in all the circumstances in which it can be placed, we know all that can be known regarding it. We know it *as it exists in space*, and we know it *as it exists in time*, and any further inquiry we may institute will be altogether without any definite object.

It will be at once allowed that the successive phenomena of mind as well as of matter admit of being arranged as antecedents and consequents, in the order in which they occur, or in other words, that the susceptibilities and powers of the mind may be examined, as well as those of a material object. But the mind being simple and indivisible, it may not so easily appear how the analogy between our inquiries respecting the material world and the mental phenomena can be carried farther. It is to be observed, however, that though the mind is simple, and admits of no integral separation of parts, though the feelings that we term complex, as truly as the feelings that we term simple, are states of a substance that cannot be divided, yet it is the very nature of certain feelings to *seem* to involve certain other

feelings as elements of themselves. It is this *seeming complexity* which is made by the inquirer into mind the subject of a *virtual* analysis. And it is this virtual analysis that bears an analogy to the actual analysis of the chemist. It must not be forgotten, however, that it is merely *virtual.* The mental physiologist does not attempt to divide a feeling into distinct parts, but only traces the feelings to which certain other feelings are regarded as virtually equivalent. The notion of the number four, for example, is one state of one simple substance, as much as the notion of one, or two, or three; but it is the very nature of the notion of four to seem to be comprehensive of the other. Every feeling almost is susceptible of this reflective analysis, and to evolve unsuspected elements of thought and passion, is the first object of the mental inquirer, as to arrange those elements in the order of their succession, as reciprocally antecedent and consequent, is the second.

There is no part of Dr. Brown's writings that appears to me to be more ingenious, or more worthy of examination, than that of which I have endeavoured to give an analysis, and yet this is one of the few parts of his works which I conceive require to be received with some explanations and limitations. In regard even to his ideas as to the composition of material bodies, I

am inclined to be somewhat sceptical. It is obvious that he proceeds upon the theory of Boscovich. Upon the merits of that most beautiful and ingenious theory I am not at present disposed to enter. Nor is it necessary for the purpose I have in view. Even admitting the corpuscular hypothesis, it seems doubtful whether the position, that an improvement upon the organs of sense would enable us at once to discover the elementary particles of bodies, can be admitted. Whatever increase of delicacy any of our perceptive organs might be supposed to receive, still its perceptions would be of the same kind as at present; and there seems no good ground for supposing that the essential elements of the material universe would be revealed to us. Though we had (what Pope has given a very good reason why we have not) a microscopic eye, still there would be nothing but rays of light present to it; and the rays reflected from two substances in chemical combination might not appear to be the same as if they were reflected from one of these substances in a simple state. It would require not merely a greater delicacy in the structure of our senses, but an entire change in their constitution to make us perceive the primitive corpuscles of matter.

Besides, it is not the object of the chemical philosopher to discover what are the elemental particles of bodies. His aim is more practical,

and he does not seek to penetrate beyond such congeries of atoms as may be perceptible to sense. The simpler forms that any body may by any means be made to exhibit, is all that he desires to know. Now, it does not appear that this could be ascertained by any refinement of organization. To return to the illustration already given; even upon the atomic theory, it is not necessary to suppose that the silicious and alkaline particle, as such, would by any increased delicacy of sensation be perceived when they co-exist in the glass. The alkali and silex, when they exist separately, are nothing more than a certain congeries of atoms bearing a certain relation to one another, and the probability is, that this relation is utterly destroyed when they form together the new compound. Indeed, this change of relation is the only difference I can conceive between mechanical juxtaposition and chemical cohesion or affinity. Even in the imperfect state of our organization, the two inquiries may, in the chemical science, be resolved into one: our sole object being, not to ascertain the original atoms that compose any body, but the changes that the body will undergo, or occasion, in new circumstances. We are affected in a particular manner by the substance glass. Subject it to a certain chemical process, and its different parts affect us in a different manner. Here is the silicious particle A. What do we know more of it than that

it affects us with certain ideas of gravity, colour, &c? In relation with the alkaline particle B, the two affect us in a manner essentially different. But we know nothing either of the one or of the other except in relation to our faculties. And, therefore, whatever delicacy there might be in our perceptive organization, we have no reason independently of the theory, to suppose that they would, in combination, affect us in the same manner that they do when they exist apart. The question as to the constituent elements of matter, however ingenious and plausible theories may be formed respecting it, is one which it is perhaps beyond the limits of our power to resolve. And it seems to follow, that the only legitimate end of inquiry is into the manner in which an object exists in *time*, the manner in which its elemental parts exist in space being beyond the reach of our faculties to discover.

This objection, however, does not interfere in the least degree with the views that Dr. Brown has built upon it: though I must add that I do not entirely agree with the illustration that he has given of *virtual comprehensiveness*. In his doctrine upon this subject, there is a degree of something approaching to mysticism which is not to be found in any other part of his writings. We are irresistibly led to consider many of our feelings as complex, and yet these complex feelings, as states of a simple and indi-

visible substance, admit not of integral separation. The analysis is only virtual then and not real; equivalent to, though not exactly the same as the analysis of the chemist. Such appears to me to be the view he has given of the subject. Now, though I entirely agree with him that the science of metaphysics is chiefly analytical, and though I conceive that he himself has effected more in the analytic department than any preceding philosopher, I cannot but think that his theory respecting the nature of the analysis in which he has so admirably succeeded is not altogether accurate.

The mind is unquestionably conceived by us to be simple and indivisible, and yet it is impossible for us not to consider many of its ideas and feelings as complex. What then is the nature of this complexness? Is it real or merely imaginary? To me it appears that the complexness is real; not, however, in a manner analagous to those compounds in the material world, that consist of an infinity of particles in chemical combination. The complexness is not of substances but of relations. And if an analogy is to be sought for in the material universe, it will be found not in chemical compounds, but in those objects that are considered by us as perfectly simple, but which exhibit themselves under an infinite diversity of aspects, and complexity of states, according to their relations to other objects. An

object that is in itself simple may exist in an unlimited variety of relations to other objects, and if, at any moment, more than one of these relations are exhibited, by the presence of two or more objects, it is obvious that we have simplicity and complexity combined—simplicity of substance and yet a complexity of relations. Take, for example, any simple metallic substance, of a determinate form, size, &c. as a particle of gold. —It stands in one relation to the solar rays; in another to the earth; in a third to our eye; in a fourth to *aqua regia;* in a fifth to its own previous states. A multitude of others might be added, but even these are sufficient to show how great a variety of relations are compatible with unity of substance. It is thus also with the mind. It is perfectly simple in itself, and all the complexness that we feel in any of its states, is merely a complexness in its relations. These relations, however, are almost as various and numerous as the objects that surround it. It has relations to matter, to mind, to its own previous states. And then, under these general heads, there are specific diversities without number.

The analyses of the mental physiologist, therefore, seem to be more than virtual. Not that they resemble the decompounding processes of chemistry. In the one case the integral separation of parts is the very end proposed; in the other case, as indivisibility enters as essentially into our idea of mind, as divisibility enters into our idea of

matter, such a separation is felt to be altogether impossible. But though the object that the metaphysician has in view has no resemblance to that which is proposed by those whose end it is to discover the component parts of particular substances, it bears a very striking analogy to that species of philosophy which is occupied with the general qualities of matter, and which, if it observes particular substances at all, observes them only with the design of resolving the phenomena they exhibit into their simplest and most general laws. Thus to have recourse to the example already referred to, we may endeavour to resolve the particular properties of gold into the general qualities of matter, and show that its weight, its colour, its form, its cohesion, its motion, are but particular instances of the great laws of repulsion and attraction. It is in a manner analogous to this, that in mind we resolve the diversified phenomena into a few simple and primitive laws, by which term we denote the most general circumstances in which the phenomena are felt by us to agree.

The means we employ in both cases bear also a striking resemblance. In order to resolve the particular qualities of material objects into their most general principles, we carefully observe the phenomena exhibited in particular circumstances; we then vary the circumstances indefinitely, removing, one by one, the objects to whose presence

any quality might be ascribed, or where it is not in our power to remove the object altogether, placing it in different circumstances. By changing the antecedent we have a new consequent, and by setting aside a part of the antecedent, we have only a part of, or, at least, we have a difference in the consequent. Those who are acquainted with the history of physical science will recollect many instances, in which, by following the spirit of this method, properties that had been supposed to be particular were ascertained to be universal, and instead of being inherent and independent, to be nothing more than the relations that objects bear to one another. I can only refer to the circumstances connected with the discovery of the principle of gravitation, and the methods by which our knowledge of it was enlarged by the successive labours of Galileo, Toricelli, and Newton.

A process analogous to this is followed in every species of mental analysis. A feeling of a peculiar nature, to refer to one of Dr. Brown's illustrations, is produced when four objects are presented to our observation. Now, though the idea of the number four itself does not admit of integral separation, one, or two, or three of the objects may be removed, and a different effect is produced upon the mind. The same remarks may be extended to the other instance adduced by Dr. Brown —a golden mountain. Whether our idea of a gold-

en mountain is to be ascribed to a certain affection of the sensual organs, or to certain laws of suggestion, it is not necessary at present to inquire. A golden mountain involves certain ideas of form, colour, weight, &c. If we suppose that these ideas are the result of affections of certain portions of the great cerebral mass, then to vary the states of these portions, is to change the antecedent; and we are thus enabled to examine the substance mind under new circumstances. If the idea of a golden mountain is the result of certain laws of suggestion, then, by varying the antecedent state of mind, we have still a new consequent.

It is obvious then that the analysis is something more than virtual. It is not indeed, in the primitive meaning of the Greek derivative, a *losing* of parts, as in chemistry, but there is an actual change effected, and that too by separation or by alteration. If we suppose the mind to act by means of material organs, it may be erroneous to say, that there is a removal of these organs from the mind, as that might imply such a separation in space, as we are not entitled to suppose; but there is, at least, such a change in the organ, that it ceases to affect the mind, or the mind is affected by it in a different manner. Or if there is merely a succession of states, then there is a change in the antecedent state, by which the consequent state is affected.

All that we know of the mind is that it has

existed in certain states of thought and emotion; these constitute the whole phenomena, and in considering them, we are irresistibly impressed with the identity and indivisibility of the substance mind. Some of these states might be conceived to have been different, had the material object that affected the mind, or the antecedent state of mind itself been different. We change the material object, or we conceive it to be changed, or we change the state of mind that was formerly antecedent, and observe the change in the state of mind that is now consequent. And when we have resolved the various affections of mind, each into a simplicity that no possible antecedent can increase, we view it as an ultimate fact, and according to the order of its succession, or other circumstances of analogy, we class it along with the other facts respecting our mental constitution.

What has now been stated does not appear to me to be inconsistent with the method of analysis that was followed by Dr. Brown, and of which he has given the most perfect example that the world was ever in possession of. On the contrary, I conceive that it contains a more simple, and a more intelligible view of the nature of his own very original investigations, and will enable us better to see the value of his principles of philosophising in regard to the mental phenomena.

The great principle with which he commences his investigations is, that all that we know of the

mind is, that it is a simple substance, which, from the time of our birth unto the present moment, has existed in certain states of thought and feeling, and that these states are to be examined—traced to their causes and in their consequences—analysed and arranged in a manner analogous to that which is observed by the physical inquirer into the material universe.—As the whole of Dr. Brown's system stands or falls with this great principle, it may be proper, before proceeding farther, to offer a few observations upon it.

That we know nothing more of the mind than that, from the time of our birth till the present moment, it has existed in certain states of thought and feeling, is a position so very obvious that I can scarcely conceive it to be disputed. Indeed, if there be any dispute, it must arise from different ideas being attached to the word *state*, because when it is used in the sense in which Dr. Brown employs it, the proposition may almost be considered as identical. The position, however, that the thoughts, and feelings, and susceptibilities, and powers of the mind, are nothing different from the mind, but are in reality the mind itself existing in different states, or that they are merely the relations that the mind bears to other minds, or to material objects, or to its own past or future states, will not by any means be so generally acquiesced in, and may therefore require a little fuller consideration.

There seems to be a natural tendency in all men, when they first reflect upon the subjects of their consciousness, to conceive that ideas and feelings are something different from the mind itself. We ascribe to them a real existence, shadowy and undefined it may be, but still real, as if they were separate entities over which we exercise a mysterious power, calling them into existence, and allowing them again to fade into nothing at our will. This tendency seems to be connected with the principle by which we are universally led to ascribe our sensations to an external cause. And in the same way that we invest* every object of perception with the fancy it begets in us, so when the object that we think of is not present, we feel as if we had conjured up an image or shadow of it in visionary reality before us. Even our abstract ideas are viewed by us under a similar aspect, though still more dim and undefinable. And our sentiments and feelings themselves, when made the objects of reflection, are apt to be conceived by us as distinguishable from the mind.

In opposition to this, Dr. Brown maintains, *that our sensations, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings, and, in short, all the mental phenomena, are not different from the mind, but are in reality the mind itself existing in different states.*

* See Note M.

That our sensations and ideas are not different from the mind, according to the tenets of many of the ancient philosophers, and of Berkeley, and many others among the moderns, is now generally allowed. In perception there is the presence of an external object,—there is an affection of the sensorial organ,—and there is an affection of the sentient mind. Of any thing more than these there is no evidence, and the doctrine as to ideas intervening between the substance and the mind is now universally abandoned.

But though this doctrine has now lost the sway that it once so widely held, there is still a tendency to consider our sensations as in some mysterious manner distinguishable from the sentient mind. Upon inquiry, however, it cannot but appear that there can be no such distinction. In perception there is the series that has been mentioned, and there is nothing more. Now, in this series, all of which we are conscious is the last part of the process—the affection of the sentient mind. That this is the case in regard to the secondary qualities of matter will be readily allowed. The mental affection bears no resemblance whatever to its material cause, whether immediate or remote. The sweetness of sugar, for example, or the fragrance of a rose, as experienced by us, has no resemblance to the particles of the rose or the sugar, or to any particular affection of the nerves, or the brain. The

are affections of mind, and of mind only. There is not, therefore, the mind *and* the sensation; for the sensation could not be supposed to have any existence without the sentient mind. We can have no direct idea of what is called sweetness in sugar or fragrance in a rose. We have a distinct idea of the sensations they produce. But nothing like the sensations is to be found in the sugar or in the rose, which are both insentient. Neither can there be any thing like the sensations in the particles of the nerves or brain, or in any state of these particles, for they also are insentient. The sensation is wholly mental, and cannot be conceived away from the mind. The unknown quality in the rose or in the sugar, that excites the well-known sensation, may exist without the mind. The nerves and cerebral mass might be supposed to be affected by the presence of these qualities in like manner. But neither the quality of the rose or of the sugar, nor the peculiar affection of the sensorial organ, constitutes the sensation. The sensation is a state of mind, and of mind only, induced by a series of external changes which are known to us only by the effect they produce.

It might be supposed that the same argument does not apply in the case of what have been called the primary qualities of matter, as our knowledge of these qualities has been considered even by those who deny the doctrine of separate ideas,

to be of a nature altogether different from our knowledge of the secondary qualities. There is no doubt a material difference in our ideas of the two classes of qualities. Extension, figure, resistance, and the other primary qualities, seem to constitute our very notion of matter, or at least they are the qualities by which matter, as we define it, becomes known to us, or by the union of which we form the complex idea of matter. They are also felt by us as peculiarly permanent, independently of our feelings, being present wherever matter is present, while the power of affecting our sight, smell, &c. is by no means universal. But though in these, and perhaps in some other respects, there is a difference in our ideas of primary and secondary qualities, there is no difference in the nature of our knowledge of them. In both cases, our knowledge is equally relative. We know them merely as the causes of certain sensations and perceptions. Our feelings of extension, resistance, &c. are not themselves *matter*, but feelings excited by matter. It is indeed the very nature of our perception of extension, figure, &c. to believe that there is an extended and figured object present to the mind, and also perhaps that we know these qualities as they exist in themselves. But when we analyse this belief, what is it but the belief that there is external to us something which is not our mind itself, but which exists independently of our

mind, and produces the affection which we denominate the perception of extension, form, &c.? The perception of extension, &c. is a mental phenomenon, and here there is the same series as in the former instance,—an external object, an organic affection, and a state of mind consequent which is called the perception of extension. It is of this affection of the sentient mind alone, of which we are conscious; and all that we know of the external object is, that in certain circumstances it is invariably the immediate antecedent of a particular perception.

In conception, memory, and other similar acts of mind, there is no object of thought present. The act may indeed depend upon a state of the nerves and brain, but that state of the corporeal organs is obviously neither conception nor any other mental act. And even upon the theory, that in such cases there is actually present to the mind an image of the absent object of our thought, it can only be supposed to be an image of the object, and can have no resemblance to our mental act. There may be an external cause of our conception or remembrance; but whether that cause is an image of an outward object, or a peculiar state of the encephalon, it can obviously bear no resemblance whatever to the feeling it produces.

What has been said of our ideas of material qualities of bodies, applies with equal force to our abstract ideas. In nature there is nothing but

individual objects. The abstraction is merely in our own mind. In many instances, that there should be an image in the same sense that there is an image of material individual qualities, is altogether unintelligible. That there should be an image of an individual object in the mind, as of a rose, an apple, is at least conceivable. But what *image* can there be of honesty, of justice, or of any other similar qualities? The abstract idea is merely a perception of relation, and this perception is wholly mental. The series in this case receives an addition. All the former series,—the external object, the sensorial affection, the mental feeling—must have been completed more than once before there can be an abstract idea. Whether the abstract idea, however, is the immediate result of the perceptions or conceptions, or whether there intervenes another corporeal affection, may be made the matter of discussion. But the conclusion is in no degree affected by our opinion upon this point. In the one case the co-existing simple perceptions form the antecedent of the relative feeling, and obviouly bear no resemblance to it; in the other case, an affection of a corporeal organ is the antecedent, which can still less be supposed to have any likeness to the state of a substance that is incorporeal.

In opposition to all that has been said, it may still be asked, have we not the evidence of con-

sciousness in favour of the opposite opinion; and do we not in all these cases, and in all similar cases, feel, as if our sensations and perceptions and ideas were, in a certain respect, foreign to the mind? It is not to be denied that this is a true statement in regard to our feelings upon the subject. But then it is to be observed, that the province of consciousness does not extend beyond the mind. It tells us only what we feel, and not what actually is. And even upon this point, consciousness may be shown to bear different, though not inconsistent testimony. For if we make our thoughts the object of a reflex act, we shall find it to be as impossible to conceive of them as distinguishable from the mind, as it is in the actual moment of simple perception, or conception, to conceive of them as otherwise than distinguishable. A *cause* of thought we can easily conceive separate from the mind in an outward object, or in a state of a sensorial organ, or an *object* we can conceive separate from the mind about which our thoughts are employed; but what notion is it possible to form of a thought distinguishable from the mind thinking?

But though the doctrine that sensations, perceptions, and ideas, are nothing separate from the mind, (a doctrine which, in the earlier steps of science, had never once been conjectured,

and which even in a period but little removed from our own, was far from being generally allowed,) appears now so obvious as to render any formal proof of it superfluous; the proposition that our sensations and ideas are in reality the *mind itself*, existing in different states, may not appear so obvious. If the explanation, however, that has been given of the negative part of the principle appear satisfactory, (an explanation into which I have been led, not so much because it was necessary to establish the conclusion, as because it afforded an opportunity of introducing some of Dr. Brown's peculiar ideas upon the subject,) the affirmative will be found, after the terms are explained, to follow almost as a necessary consequence. Indeed, after the remarks that have been made, an explanation of the terms is the only proof that can be required.

Sensation, idea, and other nouns of a similar description, are, it is to be remembered, abstract words. And as there are no abstractions in nature, but only in our minds, these, like other words of a similar description, represent no real existence, but merely our perception of relation. We can view a quality apart from the substance in which it resides, and we can invent a name expressive of the quality as thus viewed by us. But there is no such thing in nature as a quality existing without a substance. It is a mere fic-

tion of our mind, and the abstract word that we employ is the sign of our feeling, and not of any thing really in existence. Thus the words—thought, idea, &c.—express the feeling that we have in regard to a species of mental phenomena. We have seen that we are able to think of sensations, perceptions, and conceptions, as if they were distinguishable from the mind. Now, the words—sensation, idea, and thought,—express this mode of conception. But if we attend to the real existences regarding which, as viewed in a particular relation, these and other similar words express one of our modes of feeling, we shall at once perceive that our modes of viewing, or classifying, or naming them, cannot affect their essential character, and that there can be no thought distinguishable from the thinking mind. When Dr. Brown says then, that a *thought* is just the mind itself existing in a certain state, he refers to a particular thought as it really exists in the mind of an individual, and not to the idea we wish to convey by the abstract word. With this explanation, it seems obvious, that a thought is the mind thinking; an idea, the mind conceiving; a sensation, the mind feeling. Sensation—this is an abstract word denoting a feeling that we have respecting certain phenomena of mind. But the abstraction is in our mind and not in the phenomena. They are all individual, and if we take one of the class, it may be a

perception of sweetness, and even of this it must be individual, and it may be that of sugar. All that we mean by the word then is, that it is the mind experiencing a particular feeling induced by the presence of a sapid body upon the percipient nerves. In like manner, the idea of a rose is the mind conceiving a rose, and the thought of danger is the mind thinking of danger.

No additional proof seems necessary, that sensation, thought, ideas, are merely the mind itself, *existing in different states*, as this is nothing more than generalising the former particular modes of expression. If a thought is the mind thinking, then a thought is the mind existing in a certain state; as it surely cannot be denied, that the mind thinking is the mind existing in a peculiar state. It is particularly to be remarked, that it is not said that an idea is actually *the mind*, but that it is *the mind existing in a certain state*. This proposition distinctly recognises mind as a substance possessing certain qualities susceptible of various modifications or affections. These exist successively as momentary states of mind, and constitute all the phenomena of thought and feeling. The mind is that which thinks and feels. But thinking and feeling are, as we have seen, not separate from mind, they are the mind itself in different states. Not actually the mind itself. For we employ the word mind to signify the unknown substance,

which we know merely by its qualities. But as we are not to distinguish between the mind and its qualities, seeing that we know of the existence of the one only by our consciousness of the other, the conclusion seems to be irresistible, that the thoughts and feelings are the mind itself in different states.

After what has been said in regard to power in a former chapter, it will not be necessary to enter at present upon the question, as to what is to be understood by the *powers* of the mind. To those who have examined Dr. Brown's doctrines in regard to causation, I trust it will appear sufficiently obvious, that the powers or faculties of the mind, are in reality the mind itself, existing in relation to its former states, or to certain external changes.*

Such is the great principle that Dr. Brown keeps in view in all his investigations. And if we would enter into the spirit of his speculations, we must have this principle constantly before us. When we think of the ideas and feelings, the powers and susceptibilities of the mind, we must be careful not to suppose that they are different from the mind, they are the mind itself in different states and relations. When we have

* For some remarks in regard to the accordance of the views contained in this chapter with the doctrines of Phrenology, see Note N.

observed all these, analysed and classified them upon philosophical principles of arrangement, we know all that can be known of the mind, we have accomplished all that philosophy can in this department effect, and the mental science is complete.

Our knowledge of mind then, according to Dr. Brown, as well as our knowledge of matter, is merely relative. We know it only as susceptible of feelings that have already existed; and of the essence of mind, except in relation to these feelings, or of any other feelings of which our minds might in other circumstances be susceptible, we know nothing. The object that Dr. Brown proposes, is, therefore, essentially different from that of those who direct their inquiries to ascertain the nature of the substance mind. The real philosophy of mind is independent of any fanciful conjectures that may be formed in regard to the essence of the thinking principle; and differs from them (according to the excellent illustration of Mr. Stewart,) in the same manner as the inquiries of Galileo concerning the laws of moving bodies, differ from the disputes of the ancient sophists concerning the existence and the nature of motion.

But while all inquiry into the nature of mind itself is considered by Dr. Brown as unphilosophical, seeing that nothing more can be known than the successive phenomena which it exhibits, he is

carefully to be distinguished from those sceptical writers who deny the existence of mind altogether, and who suppose that our successive thoughts and feelings constitute mind itself. He expressly states, " that, by the very constitution of our nature, it is impossible for us not to ascribe the phenomena of mind, as well as of matter, to some *permanent subject. Matter* is the *permanent subject* of *certain qualities*, extension, and its consequent divisibility, attraction, repulsion; that is to say, it is the permanent exhibiter to us of certain varying phenomena which we observe. Mind is the permanent subject of certain qualities, or states, or affections, of a different class—*perception*, *memory*, *reason*, *joy*, *grief*, *love*, *hate*; that is to say, of certain varying phenomena of which we are conscious." What Dr. Brown maintains, therefore, is, that though, by the very constitution of our nature, we cannot but believe in the existence of the substance mind, it is impossible for us to know any thing of this substance, except in relation to the states that have formed or form our momentary consciousness, and that it shows our ignorance of the limits of mental physiology to inquire farther.

" He, indeed, it may always safely be presumed, knows *least* of the *mind* who thinks that he knows its substance best. ' What is the soul ?' was a question once put to Marivaux. ' I know

nothing of it,' he answered, 'but that it is spiritual and immortal.' 'Well,' said his friend, 'let us ask Fontenelle, and he will tell us what it is.' 'No,' cried Marivaux, 'ask any body *but* Fontenelle, for he has too much good sense to know any more about it than we do.'

"It is to the phenomena only, then, that our attention is to be given, not to any vain inquiries into the absolute nature of the substances which exhibit the phenomena. This alone is legitimate philosophy,—philosophy which must for ever retain its claim to our assent, amid the rise and fall of all those spurious speculations, to which our vanity is so fond of giving the names of theory and system. Whatever that may be, in itself, which feels, and thinks, and wills,—if our feelings, and thoughts, and volitions be the same,—all which we can know, and compare, and arrange, must be the same; and, while we confine our attention to these, the general laws of their succession which we infer, and the various relations which they seem to bear to each other, may be admitted equally by those whose opinions, as to the absolute nature of the feeling and thinking principle, differ fundamentally." *

Upon the principle, then, that the various feelings of the mind are nothing more than the mind itself existing in different states, and that the bu-

* Lectures, vol. i. p. 193.

siness of the metaphysician is to analyse and arrange these states, Dr. Brown proceeds to divide them into classes and orders.

"Of these states or affections of mind, when we consider them in all their variety, there is one physical distinction that cannot fail to strike us. Some of them arise in consequence of the operation of external things—the others, in consequence of mere previous feelings of the mind itself.

"In this difference, then, of their antecedents, we have a ground of primary division. The phenomena may be arranged as of two classes, the External affections of the mind, the Internal affections of the mind."

"The former of these classes admits of very easy subdivision, according to the bodily organs affected.

"The latter may be divided into two orders, Intellectual states of the mind, and Emotions. These orders, which are sufficiently distinct in themselves, exhaust, as it appears to me, the whole phenomena of the class."*

Such is Dr. Brown's division of the mental phenomena; but before proceeding to a consideration of the particular phenomena of mind, there is a general view with which we cannot fail to be struck. The mind exists in states the most

* Physiology, pp. 41—43.

various. We know all these diversities of condition, and yet we are still irresistibly impressed with the belief of the identity of the permanent subject. What is the *consciousness* by which we know the various states of mind, and what is our *belief of personal identity?*

Consciousness has been represented, by a certain class of philosophers, * as one of the intellectual powers of the mind, differing from its other powers as these mutually differ from each other, and having, for its object, all the passions and actions and operations of our minds while they are present. Now, that any particular feeling is so radically different from the sentient principle as to justify us in classifying it in the relation of an *object* to this sentient principle, is obviously inconsistent with the doctrine that I have endeavoured to establish, as that upon which Dr. Brown proceeds. Accordingly, Dr. Brown maintains, that consciousness is truly nothing more than a general name, expressive of the whole variety of our feelings. The mind cannot exist in two states, one of consciousness, and another of a feeling wholly distinguishable from it. *I am conscious of a particular feeling*, means only, *I feel in a particular manner*, or, *my mind exists in that state* which constitutes a certain feeling. In many cases our feel-

* See Reid's Essays, vol. i. p. 32. See also Stewart's Outlines, p. 18.

ings are entirely simple,* and arise, and exist, and pass away, without any consideration on our part that they are the feelings of that being to which we give the name of self; and in these instances it is obvious that there is no consciousness distinguishable from the feeling. But along with the present feeling, the remembrance of some former feeling may arise, and then, by the irresistible law of our nature which impresses us with our identity, the two feelings which we recognise as different in themselves are yet conceived to belong to the same being. But here there is obviously nothing more than the belief of our own identity, or at least there is nothing more than the consideration, that the present feeling is one momentary state of the permanent substance I. The state of mind is in no essential respect to be distinguished from the ordinary cases of remembrance, in all which there is a retrospect of some former feeling of the mind, together with that belief of identity which is common to memory in all its forms.

* Mr. Stewart is of a different opinion, and states, that, "of all the present operations of the mind, consciousness is an inseparable concomitant.". *Outlines*, 18. It seems obvious, that by consciousness he here means something distinct from the present feeling or operation of mind. Besides the radical difference in regard to separate faculties, Dr. Brown maintains that comparatively few of our feelings are accompanied with the consideration, that they belong to the being to which we give the name of self. Upon such a subject every individual must examine the phenomena in his own mind before he can arrive at a conclusion satisfactory to himself.

That Dr. Brown's representation of the phenomena connected with consciousness, is more correct than any that had formerly been given by philosophers, appears to me to be indisputable. That the notion of self, arising from the remembrance of a past and the existence of a present feeling, is the only consciousness that can be supposed to be the result of a distinct power; and that it is not necessary to suppose this power to be distinct from what is exhibited in the ordinary cases of remembrance, requires only to be stated in order to be assented to. Between the simple notion of self, consciousness, and memory, I can see no difference, except that, in the first, our attention is chiefly directed to the permanent substance self; in the second, to the present; and in the third, to the past object.

I have only further to add, that I conceive that the peculiar notions entertained by Dr. Brown respecting the indivisibility of the states of mind, has prevented his statement of this doctrine from being so perfectly satisfactory as it otherwise would have been. That the mind, as a substance, and in itself, is simple and indivisible in the most complex of its consciousnesses, cannot be disputed by those who admit that it is immaterial. But then, though simple in itself, it may be complex as we have seen in its relations; and by one or more of the related objects being removed or modified, the

mind may in this sense exist in a state more or less complex. For example, let us suppose that we experience the sensation excited by the fragrance of a rose. Dr. Reid himself would allow that this sensation might exist alone, without any remembrance of any past feeling, and without any belief in our identity. Here then we have the mind existing in one simple relation to one quality of an external object. Now it is obvious that there is here no consciousness separate from the sensation. Let the rose be now removed, and let the sensation be followed by that which is produced by the sound of a flute. In that case, the mind may be completely absorbed by the new sensation, and then the sensation and consciousness will, as in the former instance, be the same, and the mind still exists in one simple relation to one quality of body. Or we may suppose that the memory of the fragrance may continue in the mind, along with the perception of the melody. Now, I think it is conceivable, that even in this case the sensation of the sound and the remembrance of the fragrance, might exist together without the notion of self arising in the mind. It will at once be admitted that the sensation might be renewed in the mind without any such belief; and I can see no reason to prevent us from supposing that this revival of feeling might co-exist with a new sensation, and yet no such belief follow. Whether

in point of fact they ever do thus co-exist, is another subject of inquiry, and does not affect the view I wish to lay before the reader.—If we conceive the sensation and the remembrance thus co-existing, we have the mind in a complex state. It now exists in a double relation, first, to the external quality of sound, and secondly, to one of its own former states. Here then is a complex state that may be analysed. Not certainly by placing it in a crucible, or by adhibiting mechanical instruments of separation, but by conceiving or actually making the antecedent circumstances, to which it bears a complex relation, different. Suppose that the mind had not previously experienced the sensation of fragrance, then the remembrance of it would not have co-existed with the sound of the flute. Or suppose that the sound of the flute ceased as soon as the idea of the fragrance arose, and that no memory of the sound remained, then we have the memory of the fragrance alone, and nothing more. Upon any of these suppositions the notion of self could not be supposed to arise. But the remembrance of the fragrance and the sensation of the sound combined do not constitute the belief. That belief, by an irresistible law of our nature, arises upon their co-existence, but is distinguishable from them. It could not be imagined to exist without these or similar feelings; but these or similar feelings might be

supposed to exist without being followed by that belief.—Such then seems to be the analysis of our consciousness. We have a series of antecedents and consequents, or rather of powers and susceptibilities. And in the last step of the process, we have the mind, existing in one simple state in so far as relates to its essential nature, but in a state really complex in reference to outward objects and to its own antecedent states. The notion of self is perfectly simple, and we cannot in any intelligible sense apply divisibility to it. But it is the result of a variety of objects,—of external qualities of matter, and of antecedent states of mind. And though all the different elements that thus form the consciousness are one state of one indivisible subject, they are one state formed of a variety of relations. I have dwelt the longer upon this view of the phenomena, both as interesting in this particular application, and because it is the first opportunity I have had of illustrating the doctrine that I laid down in a former part of this chapter, respecting the compatibility of complexness of relations, and simplicity of subject. It will not again be necessary to enter into such minuteness of analysis.

Not only in the remembrance of a past feeling, and in the experience of a present feeling, does the notion of self arise, in turning our thoughts to all the variety of our fugitive affections, the *Identity* of the subject mind is irresistibly im-

pressed upon our belief. Now, what is the nature of the principle by which we believe in our *Personal Identity?* We do not derive our belief from reason, if by reason we mean that power by which we draw a conclusion from some former proposition; for there is nothing in any one of our sensations or emotions that seems to indicate the existence of any other, as comprehended in it. Indeed so far is the belief of our identity from being derived from reason, that the very notion of reasoning necessarily involves the belief. The truth of the belief is assumed also in memory, in which there is the revival of a former feeling, the idea of time and the notion of self. It is obvious that the idea of time and the revival of a former feeling might be conceived to co-exist without any other notion; and that the existence, therefore, of any other notion remains to be explained. As it is neither reason nor memory that conveys the belief, we can account for it only by supposing that it flows from a principle of intuition, of which no farther account can be given than that it forms a part of our constitution, and operates universally, immediately, and irresistibly as often as we think of the past and the present.*

* All the lectures upon this subject are extremely valuable, and I would particularly recommend them to the younger students of mind as admirably calculated not merely to satisfy them in re-

As our belief in the existence of mind, as one permanent substance, is derived from an intuitive principle of our nature; and as we can give no other reason for our belief, but that it is impossible for us not to believe, so our belief in a material world, external to us, and having qualities corresponding to our perceptions, is without any evidence of mere reason, except that which is founded on our actual impossibility of disbelieving the existence of such a world. Our perceptions, as we have seen, are mere states of the mind, and nothing more. What we call our knowledge of matter, is either the mental state that we term perception, or an inference from this mental state, that must be itself equally a modification of the mind. But then the very state of mind that we term perception or an inference from perception, is a state of belief of the existence of something distinct from ourselves. The

gard to this very difficult question, but also to improve their discursive faculties, to train them up to habits of analytic inquiry, and to inspire them with a truly philosophic spirit. The objections that are stated to the reality of our identity, are in a great measure original, and the answer to them is equally ingenious and satisfactory. By a process of reasoning the most perfectly subtle, and at the same time the most perfectly conclusive, he shows that it is a law both of matter and mind, that there may be a complete change of tendencies or physical character, without any *essential* change; and that absolute identity, in the strictest sense of that term, is consistent with infinite diversities.

state of mind does not lead to this belief, but is the belief. Beyond this irresistible faith, there is nothing indeed on which a reasoner can found his demonstration. But this faith has all the force of demonstration itself, because it has all the qualities of those primitive truths which demonstration itself only evolves more fully in unexpected applications of them, but does not render of stronger evidence than they were felt to possess before the demonstration began.

It appears, then, that our belief in the existence of a material world, is to be ascribed to a principle of intuition. But is this intuitive principle primary, and peculiar to our sensations, or is it common to them with other feelings? Is our knowledge of external things, to be ascribed to an immediate intuition accompanying our first sensations, or is it the gradual result of other general influences? That smelling, tasting,* hear-

* By far the most ingenious and original part of Dr. Brown's course is that which relates to the senses. To give a sketch even of his more important views upon this subject would occupy many pages. I must, therefore, satisfy myself with stating the result of his inquiries. I may here relieve for a time the attention of the reader, by a quotation, that will show how interesting the most abstract and apparently unpromising subject is capable of being made. "In considering the advantages which we derive from our organs of smell and taste, the mere pleasures which they directly afford, as a part of the general happiness of life, are to be regarded, from their frequent occurrence, as of no inconsiderable amount. The fragrance of the fields enters largely into that obscure but delight-

ing, and touching, could give us no information concerning external objects seems to be generally allowed. If we had no other senses but these,

ful group of images, which rise in our minds on the mere names of spring, summer, the country, and seems to represent the very form of ethereal purity, as if it were the breath of heaven itself.

"If we imagine all the innumerable flowers which nature pours out, like a tribute of incense to the God who is adorning her, again to be stripped, in a single moment, of their odour, though they were to retain all their bright diversities of colouring, it would seem as if they were deprived of a spirit which animates them,—how cold and dead would they instantly become,—and how much should we lose of that vernal joy, which renders the season of blossoms almost a new life to ourselves.

In vain the golden Morn aloft
Waves her dew-bespangled wing;
With vermeil cheek and whisper soft
She woos the tardy Spring;
Till April starts and calls around
The sleeping fragrance from the ground.

"It is by this delightful quality that the tribes of vegetable life seem to hold a sort of social and spiritual communion with us. It is, as it were, the voice with which they address us, and a voice which speaks only of happiness. To him who walks among the flowers which he has tended,

Each odoriferous leaf,
Each opening blossom, freely breathes abroad
Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweets.

"The pleasures of the sense of taste, in the moderate enjoyment of which there is nothing reprehensible, are, in a peculiar manner, associated with family happiness. To have met frequently at the same board, is no small part of many of the delightful remembrances of friendship; and to meet again at the same board, after years of

we might have peculiar sensations repeated in varied and endless succession, and we might ascribe these changes to a cause of some sort; but of extension, resistance, or any of what have been called the primary qualities of matter, we could have no knowledge.* As a knowledge of a cause of the kind which we term corporeal, is confessedly indiscoverable by any of the senses already mentioned, it has seemed to many philo-

absence, is a pleasure that almost makes atonement for the long and dreary interval between. In some half-civilized countries, in which the influence of simple feelings of this kind is at once more forcible in itself, and less obscured in the confusion of ever-varying frivolities and passions, this hospitable bond forms, as you well know, one of the strongest ties of mutual obligation, sufficient often to check the impetuosity of vindictive passions which no other remembrance could, in the moment of fury, restrain. Had there been no pleasure attached to a repast, independent of the mere relief from the pain of hunger, the coarse and equal food would probably have been taken by each individual apart, and might even, like our other animal necessities, have been associated with feelings which would have rendered solitude a duty of external decorum. It would not be easy, even for those who have been accustomed to trace a simple cause through all its remotest operations, to say, how much of happiness, and how much even of the warm tenderness of virtue, would be destroyed by the change of manners, which should simply put an end to the social meal; that meal which now calls all the members of a family to suspend their cares for a while, and to enjoy that cheerfulness which is best reflected from others, and which can be permanent only when it is so reflected, from soul to soul, and from eye to eye."—*Lectures*, i. 415—417.

* Berkeley supposed that *visible* figure is an original sensation of vision. But the impossibility of this Dr. Brown has satisfactorily shown, in a discussion to which there has been nothing equal in point of originality and ingenuity, since the time of Malebranche.

sophers to follow as a necessary consequence, that our acquaintance with matter is to be traced to the sense of touch.

By a more minute and delicate analysis, however, Dr. Brown has satisfactorily shown that our feelings of resistance and extension are the result of organic affections, not tactual, but muscular, and that neither of them can be considered as direct tangible qualities. Our muscular frame is not merely that by which motion is performed; it is the source also of a peculiar class of feelings, and is truly an organ of sense. The pain of inexertion, the oppressive uneasiness of fatigue arising from over-exertion, and the feelings of a fainter kind which accompany the simpler contractions, are familiar to all, and sufficiently prove that our muscular frame is a source of a peculiar class of sensations. To this source our ideas of resistance and extension are to be traced.

That our feeling of resistance in all its varieties of hardness, softness, roughness, smoothness, solidity, liquidity, &c. is not to be ascribed to a tactual origin, appears obvious from the ease, with which we may distinguish between the feeling which arises when we endeavour to perform an accustomed contraction and the contraction is impeded, and the feeling which arises on the mere touch of bodies when no muscular effort has been made. The feeling that we experience upon the pressure of any substance upon the palm

of the hand, when we do not use any muscle, is altogether different from the feeling of hardness, softness, &c. and though it may lead to the idea of these qualities, it is only because it has been associated with the feelings that result from impeded muscular effort.

It admits of equally satisfactory proof, that the ideas of extension, and of the modes of extension, are not obtained from touch. If touch be truly the direct and primary sense of magnitude and form, as hearing is the sense of sound, it should be equally the sense of every variety of these, as hearing is the sense of every variety of sound. But the simple experiment, of pressing on the palm of any one whose eyes have been previously closed any irregular figure, will satisfy him that touch of itself is insufficient to enable us to judge of magnitude or figure. When a small body, as the head of a pin, is gently pressed upon the palm, we do experience a certain sensation, but scarcely any of magnitude, and none of a distinct figure. And if the whole internal surface of the hand is equally pressed on any uniform level surface, larger than itself and of the same temperature, and if the fingers are kept separate, without any peculiar contraction of the muscles of particular fingers, no distinction of the open spaces will be perceived; and it may be added, that it will be impossible to discover by this operation the number of the fingers that are extended over

the surface compressed. These facts, which every one may easily ascertain for himself, (though those who are unaccustomed to such experiments will find an effort of abstraction necessary,) demonstrate that touch is not the immediate sense of the varieties of figure.

The knowledge of the primary qualities of matter not being derived from touch, Dr. Brown is disposed to ascribe them to a muscular affection. In order to form an idea of the manner in which this knowledge is attained, we must conceive to ourselves a being ignorant alike that it possesses a corporeal frame, and that there is a material world bearing to that frame certain important relations. This may be conceived to be the state in which the infant exists upon its first entrance into life. From the moment at which his fingers begin to move towards the palm, to the moment at which they close on it, there is a regular series of feelings, which is renewed as often as the motion is renewed. As length, whether of space or time, is nothing more, in our conception, than a series of continuous parts, the motion of a regular and limited length is thus acquired, and becomes habitual; so habitual that the first feeling which attends the incipient contracting of the fingers suggests a length that may be expected to follow. When the movement is interrupted by a hard body placed in the palm, the feeling of resistance is experienced, and according to the general prin-

ciples of suggestion that feeling becomes representative of the length of which it supplies the place. Further, the infant soon discovers that the motion of his fingers is renewable by his will. But when an external substance is placed in his hand, the motion is suspended contrary to his will. A new feeling arises, and he ascribes the feeling of resistance to something that is foreign to him. There is something then which is not himself; something that represents a certain length; something that gives rise to the feeling of resistance. Here, then, are the elements of our idea of matter, as that which is without us, which has parts, and which resists our efforts to compress it.

It follows from all this, according to Dr. Brown, that there is not any peculiar intuition to which our knowledge of external things is to be ascribed. Neither is it immediate. It is progressive in touch, as it is allowed to be in vision; and the gradual acquirement of this knowledge implies only such associations, inferences, and intuitions, as are common to all our physical reasonings.

I am aware how very difficult it is to render a subject so exceedingly obscure in itself, easily intelligible even with the fullest illustration. And though I have employed, as much as possible, the language of Dr. Brown, I can scarcely hope that my abstract will be understood, except by those who are much accustomed to such spe-

culations; even to them I would strongly recommend the perusal of this portion of Dr. Brown's work, if they wish to attain a full acquaintance with his views upon this subject. Their ingenuity and originality will amply repay them, even though they may not agree, as I confess I cannot, in this point, altogether agree in his conclusion.

That the varied exertions of our muscles, and the immediate feelings that are the result of these exertions, are indispensably necessary to our knowledge of an external world, seems to be most satisfactorily established; and that the associations, inferences, and intuitions which are common to all our physical reasonings, enter largely into the process by which we become acquainted with the primary qualities, seems also indisputable. But something more than the muscular sensations, and the influence of the general principles common in all our reasonings, is I conceive necessary to account for the origin of our notions of these qualities.

According to Dr. Brown, the notion of a resisting and extended external mass is preceded by the acquired notion of *length*. And if the notion of length in space could be traced to muscular sensation, there would be great plausibility in his theory. But to me it appears inconceivable, how we can acquire the notion of space, or of any of the modes of space, with-

out the previous notion of an extended substance. In the circumstances supposed, the little inquirer does not as yet even know that he has any organ separate from his own mind. Now, I can easily perceive that he may arrive at the notion of time, in looking back upon the series of his continuous feelings during the movement of his fingers, in the same way that the notion might arise in reflecting upon any other series of continuous feelings.* But the muscular feelings that are immediately experienced upon moving the fingers, and the notion of length of time that arises upon reflecting upon these continuous muscular feelings, are both as distinct from the notion of length of space, as the mere tactual sensation upon the pressure of a hard sub-

* Dr. Reid (Inquiry, chap. iii. sect. 6.) has proved that we do not derive the idea of extension from the sense of touch; and he hints at the argument in favour of the idea arising from what he calls "the flexure of the joints and the swelling of the muscles." But Dr. Brown has advanced a new argument from that flexure being impeded, which Dr. Reid does not meet. Both the 5th and 6th sections, however, are very well worthy of perusal. They contain more original matter, perhaps, than Dr. Brown has allowed, and may be advantageously studied along with Dr. Brown's remarks upon them. Dr. Brown's chief merit in this part of his course, consists in the light that he throws on a part of our frame, formerly very little attended to by philosophers, and in the juster views he gives of the nature of perception. A part of Note G in Stewart's *Philosophical Essays* may be also read with advantage upon this subject. There is much in that note, indeed, with which I cannot agree, and to which I shall have occasion, perhaps, to revert.

stance upon the palm is from the idea of resistance. This I conceive to be one of the rare instances, perhaps it is the only instance to be found in his writings, in which Dr. Brown has fallen into the paralogism of representing a constant conjunction as implying an absolute identity. The feeling of length of space arises in afterlife so uniformly with the feeling of length of time, that the one feeling is confounded with the other; and in his desire to simplify the result by the application of a delicate analysis, he has forgotten to analyse one of the most important steps of the preparatory process.

But even allowing that the idea of space might be acquired in the manner stated, the origin of the notions of resistance and extension remain to be explained. By the muscular feeling that is excited, when by the interposition of a material substance an accustomed movement is prevented, we may arrive at the notion of a cause. It is very generally allowed by philosophers, that the idea of causation might arise upon experiencing even the sensations produced by the secondary qualities, though if we had not the notion of space, which I have endeavoured to show, that without some other principle than any yet mentioned we could not attain, it must be very different from what we now mean by an *external* or *foreign* cause. In the present case, however, it is allowed that we are in possession of the notion of space; but still, in so far as I may

argue by analogy from my own consciousness, we could not, upon a muscular sensation, have the idea of *outness;* for in the case supposed, the little reasoner has not arrived at the knowledge of his own organ of sensation, as something extended and capable of resistance, or of the feeling of resistance. In these circumstances, I do not see how, by the effect of the universal principles of belief, the notion of resistance can be supposed to arise. If our own corporeal frame is not known by the qualities of extension and impenetrability, what meaning can we attach to the words, something external to us?—Without the idea of one material object, we have no foundation for arriving at the idea of any other. And as the idea of one such object must be taken for granted in every theory of the origin of our notions of other material existences, it seems to follow that this idea, at least, must be ascribed to some primitive law of our nature.

The tactual feeling upon the pressure of a foreign substance is one species of mental state;* the muscular sensation upon having an accus-

* There is no doubt a difficulty in distinguishing between this sensation and the ideas connected with it. Dr. Reid has stated the difficulty with a degree of fancy not often to be found in his admirable writings. The difficulty, however, is scarcely so great as he represents it. "But however difficult it may be to attend to this fugitive sensation, and to stop its rapid progress, and to disjoin it from the external quality of hardness, *in whose shadow it is apt immediately to hide itself,* this is what a philosopher by pains and practice must attain."—Inquiry, p. 105.

tomed movement impeded is another; the notion of an external quality, as extension or figure, is a third, and is as easily distinguished from the second as from the first. It may be conceded that the two last are more immediately connected together, and that the idea of extension could not arise without the muscular feeling. But still they are essentially different; and as the feelings of causation and time and successive existence, combined with the muscular sensations, do not account for the origin of the idea, we must have recourse to an original principle of our nature.

These objections, however, to Dr. Brown's theory do not interfere with his remarks upon Dr. Reid's doctrines in regard to perception. Nor indeed does the dissent which I have ventured to express from the conclusion that Dr. Brown has endeavoured to establish, lessen the opinion I entertain of the many nice and original analyses of mental phenomena that he has made in the course of his argument. His objections to Dr. Reid's classification of perception as a separate faculty are shown by himself to be, as they certainly are, independent of any theory as to the steps by which we arrive at the knowledge of the material universe. This question, however, and many others connected with it, I can only very briefly advert to.

According to Dr. Reid and his illustrious disciple Mr. Stewart, Sensation expresses merely that

change in the state of the mind produced by an impression upon an organ of sense. Perception expresses the knowledge which we obtain of the qualities of matter by means of our sensations. In Sensation, according to these philosophers, there is no object distinct from the act of the mind by which it is felt. Perception has always an external object. The quality in an external object which is the Cause of a Sensation, is the Object Perceived, and the act of the mind by which we have the conception and belief of the quality, is what is called Perception.* The mere pleasure we feel for example from the fragrance of a rose, is a Sensation, and may be conceived without our thinking of the rose. The belief that there is a quality in the rose by which we experience this agreeable feeling, is Perception. Mr. Stewart farther states† in regard to our perceptions, that "we have notions of external qualities which have no resemblance to our sensations or to any thing of which the mind is *conscious*." And Dr. Reid to the same effect, or even still more explicitly, states, in regard to the primary qualities of matter, that "*we know what they are*, and not barely what relation they bear to something else."‡

* Reid's Essays, ii. c. 16.

† See Outlines of Moral Philosophy, p. 21. See also Philosophical Essays, p. 564.

‡ Reid's Essays, ii. c. 17. I must request the reader to peruse the whole of the passages referred to in this and the two preceding notes, if he wishes fully to enter into the following reasoning.

Now in regard to these views, we have to inquire, in the first place, whether perception is a simple and primitive power; and, in the second place, whether there is here a just view of its functions. That the mere sensation of fragrance, and the reference of that sensation to a quality of the rose as its cause, are different states of mind, admits of no dispute. But what is the nature of this reference? Is it to be ascribed to a simple power; or can it be accounted for by other more general principles? It is allowed in regard to all the secondary qualities of matter, that if we had only the sensations which they are calculated to excite, we never would have had the idea of matter. That idea arises, or is suggested by the sensations excited by the primary qualities. We might indeed arrive at the idea of a cause of some sort, but not of a material cause. If we suppose then that the smell of the rose had been our only sensation, we might have referred it to some cause, but we would not have referred it to a fragrant *body* which we name a rose, because a rose involves notions of extension and figure, which it is allowed by Dr. Reid we could not have been in possession of. From Dr. Reid's writings, I am inclined to think that he would have termed even this reference an act of perception; but to me it appears too obvious to require any proof that by whatever name we may distinguish it, the reference would have been nothing more than an

instance of the general belief of causation, which is not confined to sensation, but is common to our sensations with all our other feelings. Let us now alter the supposition into the case of an individual who has by means of the tactual and muscular organs obtained the notion of causes extended and resisting. Here the sensation of fragrance is connected with the belief that the rose is the cause of the sensation, because the rose was touched or seen in many former instances, when the sensation of fragrance was experienced. But it seems as obvious as in the former instance, that though we term the reference of the sensation to the presence of a rose, an act of perception, it is in reality nothing more than the memory of former perceptions of form and colour, and the belief of the actual presence of a fragrant body of a certain colour, form, and other graceful qualities. The belief may indeed, and probably will arise without the memory; but in that case it is an instance of the associating principle alone. The argument applies to the sensations of hearing, touching, and vision, as well as to those of smell.

In regard to the primary qualities, however, it may be asked if there is not the exercise of a simple, and original, and distinct faculty. That the ideas of extension and figure are different from the tactual or muscular sensation, and that they arise immediately upon the experience of these sensations in peculiar circumstances, by an ori-

ginal law of our constitution, I have already endeavoured to prove. And if we employ the expression of *a power* of the mind in the restricted sense that I have already mentioned, I do not see any reason why the reference should not be said to be by the operation of such a power.* But in that case, Perception could not be considered as one power. There is not one but many; a power by which we become acquainted with extension,—another by which form is made known to us,—a third, by which we conceive these qualities to reside in a permanent subject, &c. This is an extension of the meaning of the word *power*, which has not certainly the warrant of custom in its favour; but all that is meant is, that by an original law of our nature, in certain circumstances, the belief of the presence of an external object, of a certain shape, size, and colour, will arise in the mind.

But there is another circumstance connected with Dr. Reid's doctrines in regard to perception, that seems to be still more objectionable than his arrangement of it as an original simple faculty. It appears from the passages in the writings of Dr. Reid and Mr. Stewart to which I have already referred, that these eminent philosophers

* In this, my opinion is different from that of Dr. Brown, though more in appearance than in reality. The determining of the difference depends in part upon the solution of the question as to the origin of our notion of extension and resistance.

conceive that we have a direct knowledge of the primary qualities of matter; that we know them "as they are in themselves." "Sensation," says Dr. Reid, in another passage, "can be nothing "else than it is felt to be. Its very essence consists in being felt, and when it is not felt it is not." * And in his Inquiry, † he thus more particularly distinguishes between our notions of primary and secondary qualities.—"The sensation of heat, and the sensation we have by pressing a hard body, are equally feelings; nor can we by reasoning draw any conclusion from the one, but what may be drawn from the other; but by our constitution we conclude the one an obscure and occult quality, of which we have only this relative conception, that it is something adapted to raise in us the sensation of heat; from the second we conclude a quality of which we have a clear and distinct conception, to wit, the hardness of the body."

Now, it is surely equally true of our perceptions as of our sensations, that they can be nothing else than they are felt to be. There is the object of perception, indeed, which we believe to exist independently of our perceiving it. But there is also a cause of our sensation which we no less believe to exist, independently of its being placed in such a relation to our sensual organs as to excite a sen-

* Essays, ii. c. 16. † Chap. v. sect. 5.

sation. Of the latter, however, it is said that we have only a relative, while of the former we have a clear and distinct conception. But though there may be a difference in the distinctness of our conception of the one and of the other, still, philosophically considered, the one as well as the other is merely the antecedent of a particular state of our mind. The states, indeed, are different; the one being simple, the other complex. But when we direct our thoughts to the cause of each, we find that all that we know of them is, that they excite in us two different feelings. What the causes are in themselves, or independently of these feelings, we know nothing. "The hardness," says Dr. Reid, "exists in the table, whether we perceive it or no;" but surely in the same sense it may be said, that the fragrance exists in the rose. The fragrance is something unknown, that in a certain relation to our olfactory nerves excites a well-known agreeable sensation; and hardness in the table is, in like manner, something unknown, that in a certain relation to our tactual organs excites the notion of hardness. In many cases the sensation excited by the fragrance of a rose exists in a simple state, and no reference is made to an outward cause. In the perception of the hardness of a table, there is a series of states; first, a tactual feeling, then a muscular feeling, and last of all, the notion of hardness. But the notion of hardness is in us, and not in the table,

in the same way that the agreeable feeling is in us, and not in the rose. Mr. Stewart states it as a *fact*, that we have notions of external qualities which have no resemblance to our sensations, or to any thing of which the mind is *conscious*. But surely we are conscious of nothing but our own feelings and notions. We are conscious not of the qualities, but of our notions of them, and what these qualities are, but the unknown causes of these notions, we cannot, according to the present constitution of our nature, ever know.

It may be objected to this view, that it introduces a new aspect into our notions of the material universe, overturns our earliest, and apparently best founded systems of belief, and is calculated to involve us in all the miseries of scepticism. This, however, is a mistaken view of the subject. However we may analyse our belief in the existence of matter, that belief still remains, and the grounds of adhering to it still remains, adapted as it is to our present condition. The great truth that Malebranche has so admirably established ought to be continually borne in mind by all those who turn their attention to speculations of this nature; that all which we can learn by our senses, though relatively true to us, and of the utmost importance in our present state of existence, is not absolutely true;—*que nos sens sont très fidelles et très exacts, pour nous instruire des rapports, que tous les corps qui nous environnent ont*

*avec le notre, mais qu'ils sont incapables de nous apprendre ce que les corps sont en eux-mêmes: que pour en faire un bon usage il ne faut s'en servir que pour conserver sa santé et sa vie; et qu'on ne les peut assez mépriser, quand ils veulent s'élever jusqu'a se soumettre l'esprit.**

In many minds there is a jealousy respecting every new truth, which shows a want of confidence in the essential union between truth and virtue. There is scarcely any great truth that, upon its first discovery, has not excited the opposition of the ignorant or indolent and

* Recherche de la Vérité, i. 237. The whole of the chapter, of which this is the conclusion, is truly admirable, and contains many views with which every student of mind should make himself familiar. There is no book that should sooner be put into the hands of the young metaphysician than this work of Malebranche. Independently of its philosophical merits, there are charms of style and beauties of thought which will always make it a favourite book with every man of taste. It is worthy of remark, however, that in the chapter to which I have more particularly alluded, while this most ingenious and pious author points out in several chapters the errors we fall into in judging by the senses of magnitude, figure, &c. he seems to take it for granted that there are such qualities.† His peculiar notions in regard to ideas probably led him into this mistake. To consider the primary qualities as well as the secondary, to be merely relatively known to us, is of the greatest importance. Indeed, if this truth is not perceived, there can be no proper apprehension of Dr. Brown's philosophy.

† Berkeley saw the consequences of the argument. See Dialogues, 132.

pretended votaries of virtue. This has been particularly the case with metaphysical truth, which has always led to the cry of materialism, or scepticism. And this science labours under the peculiar disadvantage, that it does not admit of that evidence which ultimately silences at least, those who are unwilling to admit it. In reality, however, the truths that have been taught by metaphysicians are not more at variance with the common prejudices of mankind than many of the most important and now universally admitted truths of physical science. Berkeley's theory as to vision is not by any means more apparently inconsistent with the common sense of mankind, than the discovery of Toricelli in regard to the gravity of the air. And the denial of the existence of a material world altogether cannot appear more abhorrent to truth, than the assertion that the world revolves daily round its axis, and that the sun is a body at rest. We ought certainly to follow truth wherever she may lead us, and with however malignant an aspect she may seem to regard the interests that are still dearer to us than even truth herself. The noblest homage that we can pay to knowledge and to goodness is, to own their essential unity, and to consider, that whatever is gained by the one adds to the empire of the other. *Truth and Good*, according to the

beautiful sentiment of the poet, *are one*: and in the fullest sense in which in the well-known and noble aphorism, knowledge is said to be power, it may be also said that *knowledge is virtue*.

Want of room obliges me reluctantly to pass over without any farther notice all the other subjects treated of under the head of the External Affections. I should have been anxious to have made a few observations upon the question in regard to the existence of a material world. And the examination of Dr. Reid's title to the fame which, in this part of the island, he has acquired, of overthrowing what has been called the ideal system, and placing our belief of the existence of matter upon a new and surer foundation, involves many points of general interest. The subject is well worthy of examination, even by those who take no individual interest in the philosophic character of Dr. Reid, as throwing much light upon the history of the progress of intellectual philosophy in general, and of those general prejudices that are apt to mislead every inquirer into mind. It is but justice to Dr. Reid, however, to recommend the perusal of a defence of his views, which is contained, as if by anticipation, in Mr. Stewart's Philosophical Essays. The quotations brought together by Mr. Stewart from different writers, when added to the passages quoted by Dr. Brown,

ill be found sufficient to enable the reader to draw his own conclusion.*

The class of Internal Affections are divided into two orders, intellectual states of the mind, and emotions.

Our Intellectual states of mind, however much they may specifically differ, exhibit only two generic diversities. These diversities may be expressed very nearly by the phrases, *conceptions* and *feelings of relation*, which compose all our trains of thought, if we abstract from them our sensations and emotions. The following quotation, though somewhat long, is necessary to convey an idea of Dr. Brown's views in this classification.

"It is the very nature of mind to be susceptible of these in certain trains; one perception or conception suggesting, or in other words having for its immediate consequent some other conception; as when the sight of a picture suggests the artist who painted it, and the conception of the painter suggests, in like manner, the name of some other artist of the same school, and this afterwards the city in which that school of painting chiefly flourished. The successive conceptions, in such cases, arise in the mind, in the absence of the external objects that produced origi-

* I refer more particularly to notes G and H in the *Philosophical Essays*.

nally the corresponding perceptions; and, though capable of being modified to a certain extent by states of the bodily frame, are, as far as any discoveries of the physiologist have yet been able to throw light on their origin, internal affections of the mind,—results of a tendency of the mind itself, in certain circumstances, to exist in one state after existing in some other state. The tendency to this renovation of former feelings has commonly received the name of Association of Ideas,—a name that is faulty in various respects, as limiting to our mere ideas an influence which is not confined to them, and as seeming to imply some mysterious process of union as necessary before the suggestion itself; which, whether it be found to be true or not, on a more subtile analysis of the phenomena, is at least not very easy to be reconciled with the opinions of those who invented, or have continued to employ the phrase. I have preferred, therefore, for the sake of greater precision, and for avoiding the intermixture of any thing that can be considered as conjectural, the name of simple suggestion; meaning by that phrase to express nothing more than is actually observed by us, in the readiness of certain feelings to arise after certain other feelings, as resemblances of former perceptions, or conceptions, or other preceding states of the mind; and restricting the phrase uniformly to such simple sequences of the similar feelings, exclusively of all notions

relation of object to object, that may occasionally arise from them, and be intermingled with them.

"Our trains of thought are not composed, then, merely of such conceptions, or other resemblances of former feelings, that begin, and continue, and pass away, as it were separately, without impressing us with any common relation which they bear. In the same manner as one conception suggests another conception, the perception or conception of two or more objects suggests or gives rise to certain feelings of relation, which, as states of the mind, differ from the mere perceptions or conceptions themselves that have given rise to them, not merely as these perceptions or conceptions appear to differ from each other, but generically as a distinct order of feelings.

"There is an original tendency of the mind to the one species of suggestion, in certain circumstances, as much as to the other; and as to the one of these, which affords us mere copies of former feelings, I have given the name of Simple Suggestion; to the other, which developes a new order of states of mind, in our feelings of relation, I give the name of Relative Suggestion; using the term suggestion in both cases, as that which expresses most simply the more general fact of the rise of the feelings in succession, without involving any hypothesis as to processes of former association, or any other circumstances that may

be justly or erroneously supposed [redacted] them.

"That our trains of thought, as purely [redacted] lectual states of the mind, are indicative of these two tendencies alone, and that it is only from imperfect analysis, which seems to present differences when there truly is no generic difference whatever, that they have been referred to a greater number of supposed faculties, will appear, I flatter myself, on a review of the phenomena to which we are next to proceed, under the two heads to which I have referred them." *

There is, then, a tendency of the mind, by which feelings and ideas, and all possible states of mind, give rise to certain other states. The general principles on which suggestion depends are treated of under the heads of Resemblance, Contrast, and former Proximity. But besides the primary laws of suggestion, several secondary laws are enumerated, which have great influence in the succession of our thoughts. They are as follows:—

"1. When all other circumstances are the same, one suggestion will take place rather than another, according to the longer or shorter continuance of the original feelings, when they primarily co-existed or succeeded each other.

"2. In the second place, a similar difference will take place, according as the original feelings were then more or less lively.

* Physiology, pp. 180—184.

[redacted]hird place, according as they have [redacted]e frequently renewed in the same order. [redacted]. In the fourth place, according as this order sequence has been more recent.

"5. In the fifth place, according as the primary conception in the sequence has co-existed less with other conceptions, or other feelings of any kind, that have no peculiar connexion with that which is suggested.

"6. In the sixth place, the influence of the primary laws is greatly modified by differences that are constitutional in the individual, and that continue during the whole course of life, to give a peculiar direction to the suggesting principle. Such are the differences of genius, or of temper, or disposition; in all of which words an evident reference is implied to an original source of these varieties in the very frame of our being."*

"7. In the same manner as the influence of the primary laws of suggestion is modified by lasting differences of temper or disposition, it is modified also by differences in this respect which are less permanent,—by the days, or hours, or minutes of good or bad humour, and in general of all the emotions, pleasing or painful, that are able while they last to warm even the sullen to occasional sprightliness and kindness, or, by an opposite transformation, to convert 'the gay to grave, the lively to severe.'" P. 212.

* Physiology, pp. 199, 200.

"8. Another secondary influence [redacted] of thought is derived from the state [redacted] body." P. 213.

"9. Another modifying influence in suggestion is that of general habit." P. 214.

There are two facts respecting suggestion which it is of the greatest importance to attend to. The *first* is, that though we use the phrase "*train* of thought," we must not conceive that, as in a procession of visible figures, the one idea vanishes from view when the other becomes visible; the prior conception in such a case often remains so as to co-exist with the conception which itself has induced, and may afterwards suggest other conceptions or other feelings, with which it may co-exist in like manner in a still more complex group. The *second* is, that all that we observe in the succession of our thoughts is the simple fact, that they follow one another according to certain laws. We must not suppose that we *explain* the fact by saying, that they were formerly *associated*.

"It is a law of the mind, that feelings which were formerly proximate admit of reciprocal suggestion, when either of them has been primarily induced. But this is one law, or expression of one general tendency of the mind, not two distinct laws expressive of two general tendencies." —"The objects are originally perceived together; this state of mind is the result of a general law of

[redacted]he one afterwards, on some new oc-[redacted]ien perceived singly, awakens the concep-[redacted]f the other; the feeling thus induced is the [redacted]sult of a mental tendency different from that on which our mere perceptions, whether simple or complex, depend, but still only of one additional tendency." P. 226, 227.

In the erroneous notions that have been entertained upon this subject originated, as Dr. Brown conceives, those arrangements of the mental phenomena in which have been contained such a superfluity of distinct faculties.

"When all the phenomena of suggestion were ascribed to previous association, there must always have been a great difficulty felt in the reference to former association of many complex phenomena wholly different from any that had before existed in combination. It would seem the more necessary, therefore, in order to account for them, to have recourse to various faculties, or general tendencies of the mind, different from those of simple suggestion itself; merely because the influence of the general suggesting principle had been improperly limited." P. 229, 230.

Among those supposed powers, Dr. Brown mentions Conception, Memory, Imagination, and Habit.

"If there were truly any process distinct from perception itself, by which, when two objects are perceived together, some mysterious change takes

place in them with relation to future suggestion, which renders the complex perception different from what it would otherwise have been, we might then understand the necessity of expressing this mysterious process by one phrase, and the subsequent suggestion by another. There would then truly be a principle of association, and also a principle of suggestion, that might be called in a more restricted sense a power of conception. But if, between the double perception and the actual suggestion that follows, there be no mysterious process whatever; and all that is known of the mind in this respect be its tendency at the moment of suggestion to exist in the state of a particular conception, in consequence of the former proximity of the corresponding perceptions, or of the resemblance or contrast, or any other relative quality of the objects; then is it evident, that we are not entitled to invent the names of two distinct faculties, to account for one simple sequence. The suggesting principle is that principle by which conceptions and certain other feelings arise; and could not be ranked as a general tendency of the mind, if there were nothing to be suggested. There are not a power of conception and a power of suggestion: but there is one general power or tendency, which may be expressed by either of those words, or by the word association, if it should seem preferable, that, in certain circumstances, gives rise

to certain conceptions, and, as the source of every simple sequence in our trains of thought, is all that can be meant by any of those varieties of verbal designation. The supposed power of conception, when any particular conception arises in a train of thought, does not differ more from the power or principle of suggestion, in consequence of the more general influence of which it has arisen, than the power of uttering a single word differs generically from the power of uttering whole sentences. Whether we speak of a power of conception, or of a power of association or suggestion, we have regard to the rise of one simple feeling, and express only one simple tendency of the mind to exist in one state after existing in another state; the only difference being, that when we use one of these words, *conception*, we have chiefly in view the relation of this state of the mind to some external object formerly perceived, and that when we use either of the other words, *suggestion* or *association*, to express the very same internal sequence, we have chiefly in view the relation which the two parts of the simple sequence bear to each other, as directly antecedent and consequent." Pp. 233—235.

In regard to the other supposed faculties we must be very brief. *Memory* he conceives to be nothing more than the conception of an object combined with the notion of time.

"The complex phenomena to which we give the name of memory, may be considered as proof of a tendency of the mind to exist in the state which we term a conception, and of a tendency also to exist in the state which constitutes a feeling of relation, they are illustrative of the two mental capacities of simple and relative suggestion." *Imagination* and *Habit* admit of an equally easy resolution into simpler elements.

We cannot long observe two objects, without being impressed with some relation that they seem to bear to each other, and this tendency is equally true of our conceptions and other internal affections.

These *Feelings of Relation* constitute the *second* order of our intellectual states.

The variety of Relations may be classed as Relations of Co-existence, and Relations of Succession, according as they involve, or do not involve the notion of time.

The Relations of Co-existence may be reduced under the following heads: Position, Resemblance or Difference, Proportion, Degree, Comprehensiveness.

There is no part of Dr. Brown's system more interesting or valuable than that which relates to this part of our mental frame; not merely as settling questions that had divided philosophers, almost from the time that philosophy might be said to have a beginning, but also as throwing a

new light upon many processes of thought, an acquaintance with which is of the greatest importance in the conduct of the understanding. The power of abstraction, the power of judgment, the power of reasoning, the faculty of taste,—in how much darkness has the science of metaphysics been involved by an injudicious employment of these terms, without a due analysis of the phenomena to which they refer; or rather, (to apply a very admirable simile of Hobbes) philosophers, in treating of these and other similar forms of expression, "have found their error visible, without knowing how to clear themselves, but spend their time, fluttering over their books; as birds that, entering by the chimney, and finding themselves enclosed in a chamber, flutter at the false light of a glass window, for want of wit to consider which way they came in."* I can conceive nothing that conveys a more vivid idea of the difficulty in which all preceding philosophers have been involved, by attending to the words that express general or abstract notions, instead of attending to the mental processes by which we are brought to the use of these words. Let us, then, with the "wit we have now learned" from Dr. Brown, consider which "way we came in."

Of the nature of the feelings of relation of which Dr. Brown speaks, innumerable illustra-

* Leviathan, 15.

tions might be given. We can scarcely direct our attention to any collection of objects without experiencing them all. In turning my eye upon the scene that opens upon the apartment where I write, I find a multitude of objects of perception before me. The distant mountain, half concealed in clouds—the river, sleeping in graceful beauty amidst the gay seats and white-washed cottages that adorn its wooded banks—the castle, that frowns in ancient majesty from one of its islands—the cattle grazing in the well-cultivated fields—these successively attract my eye, without exciting perhaps any other feelings than those which their forms, colours, and movements, awaken in my perceptive organs. This, then, is one state of mind, and constitutes what is denominated perception. By degrees my eye settles upon the tower that rises upon the island formed by the division of the stream, in whose peaceful waters I see another tower, with its broken outline of ivied walls: but here a new feeling arises—a feeling of the *resemblance* between the two. This feeling is neither the perception of the tower itself, nor the perception of its reflection in the river, but essentially different from either. A similar feeling arises in perceiving two swans leaving their lonely islet, and 'rowing their airy state.'—And now, in looking over the whole scene, I see it under a new aspect: The mountain reminds me of other mountains, though more rugged and of bolder outline; the seats

I perceive differ from the cottages in many respects, but they resemble in this, that they are alike the habitations of human beings—who, with many individual diversities, are all distinguished from the cattle browzing in the fields; though they agree with them too, in the power of voluntary motion; and this power marks a difference between the animal creation, and the trees, and plants, and flowers, that beautify and diversify the prospect.

Here every thing seems simple and obvious, with nothing mystical, or of difficult interpretation; yet here we have the whole process of reasoning, judging, abstracting, that has given rise to so many controversies. When certain objects are presented to us, a feeling of resemblance arises which is different from perception or conception, but of which we have as distinct an understanding. I see two horses—a feeling of resemblance between them arises. I see two sheep—there is a feeling of resemblance between them also. I consider the four together—I have a feeling of difference in certain respects, but of resemblance in other respects. Two birds, in the mean time, fly past, and a similar process takes place. And here is the whole mystery of the formation of *genera* and *species*, in which there is perception and conception, and certain feelings of relation.

But the perception of resemblance was not the only feeling of relation that arose in the instance I

have already referred to. When I speak of the *distant* mountain, I consider its relation, in *position*, to the woods and waters that are nearer. When I speak of the gay seats, I consider them as larger, in *degree*, than the cottages that are scarcely seen among the trees. When I speak of the cattle grazing in the cultivated *fields*, I consider the fields as *comprehending* the spaces that the fences surround. All these, it will be observed, are Relations of Co-existence, and the idea of time does not enter into any of them. But another relation, still more important than any, remains to be named. When I speak of the *well-cultivated* fields, I consider them in relation to the industry that has changed them from the state of neglect in which they once were left, in common with the mountain scenery, and brought them, by many successive steps, into their present state of luxuriant fertility. Here the idea of time is necessarily involved, and the feeling of invariableness of antecedence and consequence, or of *Power*, arises.

The most important of the relations that have been mentioned, are unquestionably those of resemblance and causation. In my farther remarks, I shall confine myself to the first of these.

As it is only by their qualities that objects become known to us, the resemblance which we feel between objects must be in one or more of their qualities. In the instances to which I have al-

ready alluded, our attention is directed to the objects chiefly as having similar qualities. But there are other cases, in which our attention is directed to the resembling qualities, without referring them to the objects in which they reside. Thus, in looking at snow, we feel a resemblance in the colour to that of a swan, and making the quality, and not the subjects, the object of our thoughts, we have the notion of whiteness. A similar process takes place in regard to many other sensible qualities; nor is it peculiar to them. In regard to moral qualities, there is a series of feelings strictly analogous. In attending to the conduct of an individual in certain circumstances, a feeling of approbation or disapprobation arises. A feeling of the same nature arises upon contemplating the conduct of another individual; or of the same individual in different circumstances. We remember our former emotion—a feeling of its resemblance to the present is the immediate consequence, and thus we have the abstract notion of *virtue* or *vice*.

In many of these instances there seems also to be the operation of another principle that I have more than once referred to—that by which we ascribe a permanent subject to whatever we make the object of our thoughts. When the simple qualities of hardness, colour, figure, affect us in an individual instance, they generally lead to the notion of a substance in which they reside. And by the in-

fluence of the same principle, when we think of one of these qualities separately, abstracting it from a variety of objects, we impart to it, in our imaginations, a separate existence.

Having seen the nature of the process by which we arrive at ideas of genera and species, and of abstract qualities, the next step, by which we give names to our ideas, is no more difficult of comprehension, than that by which we give names to any of our other ideas or feelings. Generic and abstract terms are expressive of our feelings, in regard to a variety of objects or qualities, or of qualities and substances conceived to be independent of us; as appellatives are expressive of our ideas in regard to individual objects, or of qualities conceived to be inherent in them. To denominate a certain class of beings, considered by us under a particular aspect, we employ the word animal; or rather, perhaps, we employ it as expressive of our feelings in regard to them; in the same way that to denominate a particular individual; or rather (since we can express nothing but what we feel) to express our feeling or notion of a particular individual, we employ the word Peter. By the word in both cases we express our notions; the notions are of different kinds, but the principle by which we employ a sign is the same. In both cases it follows our notion, and does not precede it; and though primarily employed, with the intention of

conveying our ideas to others, it is useful in giving a permanence also to our own conceptions.

It may farther be remarked upon this subject, rather in explanation of what has already been said, than as any thing additional, that we cannot properly be said to have an abstract *idea* of any class of objects, if we use the word idea as synonymous with image. It is a feeling or state of mind that is the consequence of certain ideas. When we are said to analyse our general ideas, therefore, we must not be misled by the phraseology into the notion that the state is complex, at least in the sense in which complexness is generally used. The feeling of resemblance itself is a simple state, and admits of no analysis. There is first the conception of two or more objects—two triangles for example. This state is complex, because we could conceive the mind existing in the conception of only one. The conception of the two triangles is followed by a feeling of resemblance between them, and the conception and feeling of resemblance continuing to co-exist, form a new state of mind. This state is complex, but the analysis of it is peculiar. The conceptions could exist without the feeling, but not the feeling without the conceptions. Take away the conceptions and the feeling vanishes. Nor is even this all; the conceptions admit of analysis, but not the feeling of relation. We can conceive one of the conceptions absent, but no part of the feeling can be removed. This may

be illustrated by the galvanic effect upon the tongue, produced by the common experiment of placing that organ between zinc and silver. If the tongue is touched by the silver alone, there is a certain sensation of touch and taste, and thus with the zinc; the same still holds, even when both are applied, if they are not in contact; but as soon as they are in contact the galvanic feeling is produced. The sensations of touch and taste, occasioned by the application of the zinc and silver, may be separated by the removal of one of these substances, but the galvanic affection admits not of such an analysis.

The great error that many fall into, in considering complex words, may thus be avoided. We are apt to conceive that abstract words express something that admits of being considered separately from any thing else, and try to fix our thoughts upon this separate entity. But the endeavour, as we have seen from the preceding analysis, must be vain. Every abstract word expresses a feeling of relation; that feeling is the result of a preceding affection of mind; and to endeavour to experience the feeling without the preceding affection, is as vain as to hope to discover the galvanic effect without the application of the zinc or silver; or to think to find it in one of the conceptions is as vain as to think to find the galvanic effect by the application of one only of the substances. The relation, in short, is not in one or other of the objects, nor in both taken to-

gether, but in the mind, and in the mind only in reference to its conceptions of these objects; and it is in the mind in this reference that we must seek for it. To hope to have a clearer idea of it by considering it apart, would be to remove the substance, that we might have the light of the sun shining more clearly upon the shadow.

In the ancient schools of philosophy, the most prevalent doctrine respecting general ideas was, that they have an existence independent of the human mind, and that as material things are the objects of our powers of external perception, so general ideas are the objects of the intellect. Differences of opinion, indeed, subsisted in regard to the mode of the existence of *genera* and *species*. Plato and his followers maintained that they may be disjoined from the objects of sense, while Aristotle conceived that they are inherent in them; but it was allowed by both, that, corresponding to every general word, there is an idea having a real existence independent of the understanding.* A very different doctrine seems, indeed, to have been propagated by Zeno, and some of his followers, but it attracted comparatively little notice, till it was revived in the eleventh century by Roscelinus, and his celebrated pupil Abelard, who maintained that there are no ideas corresponding to general terms, and that words

* Those who wish to know more particularly the opinion of the ancients on this subject, may consult Brucker, or the abridgment of his statements on this point, in the writings of Reid and Stewart.

are the only objects of our thoughts in all our general speculations. This doctrine, which is well known in the history of Philosophy by the name of Nominalism, was long maintained with a zeal of which we can form but a feeble idea, in opposition to those who adhered to the tenets of Aristotle, and who were distinguished by the name of Realists. In the progress of science, however, the theory as to the transmission of sensible species from material objects lost its sway, and along with it the doctrine as to general ideas having an existence independent of the mind, was also abandoned. But though the particular theory, as to separate ideas intervening between the material universe and the human mind, fell into neglect, the prejudice in which it had its origin still maintained its hold, and exhibited itself under a new form, involving the same essential error. It was now maintained, that though there is no external entity resembling our abstract ideas, and though perhaps our abstract ideas are not to be distinguished as separate from the mind itself, still that we are able to frame abstract ideas, by which was meant ideas of qualities, modes, and substances, exclusive of all others, and representative of every individual of its peculiar class. Thus they conceived, that by leaving out of particular colours that which distinguishes them one from another, and retaining that only which is common to all, the mind could form an

idea of *colour in abstract*, which is neither red, nor blue, nor white, nor any other determinate colour. And in the same way by leaving out of view all that is peculiar in particular individuals, and retaining only what is common to all, the mind arrives at the abstract idea of *man*, wherein there is included colour, but neither white nor black, nor any other particular colour; and also stature, but neither tall nor low, but something abstracted from all.* "General ideas," says Locke, "are fictions and contrivances of the mind, that carry difficulty with them, and do not so easily offer themselves as we are apt to imagine. For example, does it not require some pains and skill to form the general idea of a triangle? (which is yet none of the most abstract, comprehensive, and difficult;) for it must be neither oblique nor rectangle, neither equilateral, equiangular, nor scalenon, but all, and none of these at once. In effect it is something imperfect that cannot exist; an idea, wherein some parts of different and inconsistent ideas are put together." †

Such was the view that succeeded to that of the Realists, and which, under the name of *con-*

* See Berkeley's Principles of Human Knowledge, Introduction, sect. vii. viii. ix. That Berkeley does not give an exaggerated representation of the doctrines of his opponents, is obvious from the passage he quotes from Locke.

† Essay, B. iv. c. vii. sect. 9.

ceptualism, divided the philosophical world with the doctrine of the followers of Roscelinus and Abelard. Among the latter are to be found almost all the great names of modern times. Hobbes, Berkeley, Hume, Campbell, Condillac and Stewart, are the most distinguished of those who have given the sanction of their authority to it. That all these illustrious individuals go into all the tenets of the earlier Nominalists, I am far from affirming; or even, that their views upon all points respecting general ideas and general words coincide. Indeed it is difficult to give an account of the doctrines held by any one of them, to which inconsistent expressions might not be found in his own works. In the following particulars, however, they all seem to agree,—that words are essential to all general reasoning, and that general words may be used without exciting any determinate particular ideas. Hobbes and Stewart appear to go a step farther than the others, and certainly come nearer to the theory as originally propounded. Hobbes expressly states, not merely that words are essential to general reasoning, and that without them all our conclusions would be particular, but that it is words that give to our conclusions all their generality. "Truth," says he, "consisteth in the right ordering of names in our affirmations."*

* Leviathan.

In the Elements of the Philosophy of the Human Mind, Mr. Stewart, in his answer to an attempt made by Dr. Price to revive the theory of the Realists, has laid down a doctrine which contains an addition to that of Hobbes, but in the conclusion it is essentially the same. "There are only two ways in which we can possibly speculate about classes of objects; the one, by means of a word or generic term; the other, by means of one particular individual of the class which we consider as the representative of the rest; and these two methods of carrying on our general speculations are at bottom so much the same, as to authorise us to lay down as a principle, that without the use of signs all our thoughts must have related to individuals. When we reason, therefore, concerning classes or genera, the objects of our attention are merely signs; or if in any instance the generic word should recal some individual, this circumstance is to be regarded only as the consequence of an accidental association, which has rather a tendency to disturb than to assist us in our reasoning."*

The view that is given by Mr. Stewart, though he seems to consider it the same in every respect with that of Berkeley and Campbell, differs from it, as I conceive, in various important particulars. It is in the practical application of the doctrine,

* Stewart's Elements, vol. i. p. 191.

however, rather than in the doctrine itself, that the difference is to be found. Berkeley (and in this case he is followed by Hume and Campbell,) compares the use that is made of words to that which is made of letters in algebra; and conceives that as an idea which is in itself particular, becomes general, by being made to represent or stand for all other particular ideas of the same sort, and as that particular idea becomes general by being made a sign, so the name by being a sign is made general, though taken absolutely it is particular. Dr. Campbell, in his admirable work on the Philosophy of Rhetoric, gives a theory to explain the fact, which he acknowledges to appear extremely mysterious, that mere sounds convey knowledge to the mind, *even when they excite no idea of the thing signified.* And in one passage, he states it in language as explicit as that which we have seen used by Hobbes, that "beyond particular truths or individual facts, first perceived and then remembered, we should never be able to proceed one single step in thinking, any more than in conversing, without the use of signs."*

I have been thus minute in giving an account of the doctrines maintained by preceding philosophers, because when an error is once exploded, there is always a difficulty in supposing that it ever could have been embraced by men of supe-

* Philosophy of Rhetoric, vol. ii. p. 114.

rior minds, and thus the merits of him who first detected it are not sufficiently appreciated. The preceding extracts, however, are, I trust, sufficient to show how much this part of intellectual science is indebted to the discoveries of Dr. Brown; and, indeed, now that his view is become familiar, nothing but actual quotations from the writings of such men could have satisfied many that any other opinion could ever have been maintained. Before leaving the subject, I must repeat that I am aware that expressions inconsistent with those which I have quoted are to be found in other parts of the works from which the quotations have been taken. But this arises from the inconsistency of error, and not from the writers having arrived at the truth. It may also be necessary to state, that I am far from affirming that the principles of the nominalists uniformly influenced their own speculations, or that they will influence the speculations of those who receive their doctrines. The operations of our faculties have, by the wise appointment of nature, been made independent of our theories concerning them, and our reasoning in many instances may be just while the theory of the reasoning process may be most erroneous; in the same way that the parts of our corporeal frame rightly perform their functions, while we may be altogether ignorant of the physiology of that frame, or adopt hypotheses concerning it worse than ignorance. But it is also true, that

every error in science is calculated to affect the corresponding art. And I know of few errors in the science of mind that are calculated to have a worse effect upon the art of thinking than that of the nominalists. If truth, according to Hobbes, is nothing more than the disposition of words, the arguments against the reality and immutability of truth appear altogether unanswerable.* And what effect is the doctrine of Mr. Stewart, that "words are the sole objects about which our thoughts are employed when the subjects of our reasoning is general,"† and that "language is *the sole instrument* by which our speculations are carried on when they extend beyond individuals," likely to produce on the youthful inquirer? In many instances the natural vigour of the mind may render the doctrine harmless, even when it is believed. But there can be no doubt but that its tendency is to reduce the science of reasoning into a science of words, or rather to erect an effectual barrier to all progress in any science whatever.‡

* Horne Tooke was well aware of this. And in so far as his work is to be considered as containing a philosophical argument upon abstract notions, the force of it depends upon Hobbes's premises.

† Elements, vol. i. p. 210.

‡ The view given by Bishop Berkeley is certainly less likely to mislead, because, though he maintains, with Hobbes and Stewart, that it is our words only that are general, he does not, like Mr. Stewart, direct us to attend solely to our words, but on the contrary, to dismiss as much as possible our words from our thoughts,

The view of abstract ideas, maintained by Locke, as something that may be embodied by the imagination, by an act of the will,* involves the essential error of the realists; for if there were a possibility of conceiving an abstract triangle, there would be no more absurdity in supposing that there is an external form correspond-

and to attend to our ideas. This rule is followed with the good consequence, that if we direct our thoughts to ideas, there is at least a probability that feelings of relation may arise, which is altogether impossible if we attend to words alone. But as it is to one particular idea that he directs us to turn our attention as representative of a whole class, and not to many of the individuals of the class, our conclusions will be too general or too limited, and cannot be defined by the natural relations of things.

* I have not taken notice of the opinions upon this subject delivered by Dr. Reid. The good sense of that excellent philosopher kept him from falling into the errors of the nominalists or the conceptualists; but though he saw that their views were erroneous, he did not arrive at the knowledge of the truth opposed to their errors. "An universal is not an object of any external sense, and therefore, cannot be imagined, but it may be distinctly conceived. When Mr. Pope says 'the proper study of mankind is man,' I can conceive his meaning distinctly; although I neither imagine a black or a white, a crooked or a straight man." It is obvious that Dr. Reid uses the phrase *conceiving his meaning* in a sense analogous to understanding his meaning. But this expression is too vague to entitle us to suppose that he was acquainted with all that passes in the mind in the generalising process. It would be allowed on all hands, by the nominalists as well as the conceptualists, that we *understand the meaning* of abstract propositions. The only difficulty is as to what really passes in the mind, when we are said to understand an abstract proposition. This difficulty Dr. Reid has left as he found it, and it was reserved to Dr. Brown to remove it.

ing to it, than there is in supposing that there is a material object of sense in the case of external perception. And though nothing could be farther from the mind of Mr. Locke than to draw the same practical conclusion from his doctrine, in regard to the conduct of the understanding, that was drawn by the followers of Aristotle in the dark ages, still its legitimate consequences are in direct opposition to the Baconian methods of inquiry; and the doctrine itself is unquestionably calculated to puzzle the mind in vain endeavours to discover what has not, and cannot have, an existence.*

The great merit of Dr. Brown consists in the clear and satisfactory analysis of what passes in our mind in the process of generalising, by which he shows that it is a threefold process. We perceive two or more objects—we are struck with their similarity in certain respects—we invent a common appellative to express the objects that agree in exciting the same relative feeling. This explanation corresponds so exactly with the phenomena, that it requires only to be stated in order to be admitted; and no difficulty remains to be explained, if it is not the fact, that the discovery of what appears so simple and obvious, should

* For some excellent remarks upon the effects of this part of Locke's system, see Berkeley's Principles, Introduction.

have been made at so late a period in the history of philosophy. The solution is, no doubt, to be found chiefly in the extraordinary powers of analysis that distinguished the ingenious discoverer; but in no small degree also in the mistaken doctrines that formerly prevailed in regard to the powers and ideas of the mind, as something that may be distinguished from the mind itself. Now, however, that the discovery of the process has been made, its truth and importance cannot fail to be duly appreciated; and it will in all future ages be considered as one of the most important steps that was ever made in metaphysical science. It shows us upon what foundation all abstract truth ultimately rests; it points out the path by which general conclusions can alone be arrived at; and it teaches the true use that is to be made of language, whether in prosecuting our own inquiries, or in communicating our ideas to others. *

* In this last respect, the doctrine of Dr. Brown is of incalculable advantage: I cannot at present enter upon it, and must content myself with referring to those lectures that treat of it fully, and refer to note M, in his *Inquiry into the Relation of Cause and Effect*. The concluding paragraph, beginning "*A habit of constant and quick analysis of every complex word,*" is particularly deserving of attention.

The feelings of the relation of comprehensiveness, and of succession, the one of which involves the process of reasoning, and the other the various doctrines as to cause and effect, I must also pass over.

As there is from various secondary causes a tendency in certain individuals to one species of simple suggestion rather than another, so from constitutional and other causes, there is a tendency to one species of relative suggestion rather than another. In one, there is a tendency to the suggestion of relations of resemblance; in another, to relations of causation: and this difference of tendency is the origin of the intellectual differences that are to be observed among individuals.

In the same way that Conception, Memory, Habit, &c. were resolved into Simple Suggestion, what have been called the powers of Judgment, Reasoning, Abstraction, may be resolved into a tendency to Relative Suggestion. In fact, as Judgment is merely the perception of relation that arises upon the conception or perception of two or more objects, or of two or more affections of the mind, it is nearly synonymous with Relative Suggestion. Reasoning is nothing more than a series of consecutive judgments, and cannot upon any philosophical grounds be considered as a separate faculty. Abstraction is another power by which we have been supposed to be able to separate in our thoughts certain parts of our complex notions, and to consider them abstracted from the rest. If by this it is implied that the mind has a power of *intentional separation*, the existence of the faculty of abstraction must be altogether denied. The exertion of such

a power would in every instance involve a contradiction; for the state preceding the intentional separation involves the very abstraction which it is supposed to produce. If we *know* the part that we single out, we have already performed all the separation that is necessary; if we do *not* know what we are singling out, the separate part of the complex whole may indeed arise to our conception, but the operation of a peculiar faculty is not necessary to account for it thus arising. In conceiving particular qualities apart from the rest, or from the subject in which they permanently reside, we only, as has already been observed, repeat the process by which our conceptions of those qualities are originally formed. We received them separately through the medium of different senses; and each, when it recurs separately, is but the transcript of the primary separate sensation. When along with one quality of an object thus singled out, a similar quality in another object arises in our mind, then by the common laws of relative suggestion the feeling of resemblance arises, and we employ an abstract word, as whiteness, hardness, to express our relative feeling.*

The resolving of these powers of judgment, reasoning, and abstraction into the capacity of

* This process corresponds to what has been denominated by some metaphysicians the power of generalization.

relative suggestion terminates that part of Dr. Brown's course which relates to the intellectual phenomena. The following remarks with which he connects his observations on the intellectual states with those on the emotions, though long, cannot with propriety be omitted.

"In the view which we have taken of the external or sensitive affections of the mind, we have traced those laws, so simple and so efficacious, which give to the humblest individual, by the medium of his corporeal organs, the possession of that almost celestial scene, in which he is placed, till he arrive at that nobler abode which awaits him,—connecting him not merely with the earth which he treads, but indirectly also with those other minds which are journeying with him in the same career, and that enjoy at once, by the same medium of the senses, the same beauties and glories that are shed around them, with a profusion so divine, as almost to indicate, of themselves, that a path so magnificent is the path to heaven. A few rays of light thus reveal to us, not forms and colours only, which are obviously visible, but latent thoughts, which no eye can see; a few particles of vibrating air enable mind to communicate to mind, its most spiritual feelings,—to awake and be awakened mutually to science and benevolent exertion, as if truths, and generous wishes, and happiness it-

self, could be diffused in the very voice that scarcely floats upon the ear.

"Such are our mere sensitive feelings, resulting from the influence of external things, on our corresponding organs, which are themselves external. The view of the intellectual states of the mind, to which we next proceeded, laid open to us phenomena still more astonishing—those capacities, by which we are enabled to discover in nature more than the causes of those brief separate sensations which follow the affections of our nerves,—to perceive in it proportion and design, and all other relations of parts to parts, by which it becomes to us a demonstration of the wisdom that formed it,—capacities, by which, in a single moment, we pass again over all the busiest adventures of all the years of our life, or, with a still more unlimited range of thought, are present, as it were, in that remote infinity of space, where no earthly form has ever been, or, in the still more mysterious infinity of time,—in ages, when the universe was not, nor any being, but that Eternal One, whose immutable existence is all which we conceive of eternity.

"Such are the wonders, of which we acquire the knowledge, in those phenomena of the mind which have been already reviewed by us. The order of feelings, which we are next to consider, are not less important, nor important only in themselves, but also in their relation to those

other phenomena which have been the subjects of our inquiry; since they comprehend all the higher delights which attend the exercise of our sensitive and intellectual functions. The mere pleasures of sense, indeed, as direct and simple pleasures, we do not owe to them; but we owe to them every thing which confers on those pleasures a more ennobling value, by the enjoyments of social affection which are mingled with them, or the gratitude which, in the enjoyment of them, looks to their divine author. We might, perhaps, in like manner, have been so constituted with respect to our intellectual states of mind, as to have had all the varieties of these, our remembrances, judgments, and creations of fancy, without one emotion. But without the emotions which accompany them, of how little value would the mere intellectual functions have been! It is to our vivid feelings of this class we must look for those tender regards which make our remembrances sacred; for that love of truth and glory, and mankind, without which, to animate and reward us, in our discovery and diffusion of knowledge, the continued exercise of judgment would be a fatigue rather than a satisfaction; and for all that delightful wonder which we feel, when we contemplate the admirable creations of fancy, or the still more admirable beauties of their unfading model; that model which is ever before us, and the imitation of which, as it has been

truly said, is the only imitation that is itself originality. By our other mental functions, we are mere spectators of the machinery of the universe, living and inanimate; by our emotions, we are admirers of nature, lovers of man, adorers of God. The earth, without them, would be only a field of colours, inhabited by beings who may contribute, indeed, more permanently, to our means of physical comfort, than any one of the inanimate forms which we behold, but who, beyond the moment in which they are capable of affecting us with pain or pleasure, would be only like the other forms and colours, which would meet us wherever we turned our weary and listless eye; and God himself, the source of all good, and the object of all worship, would be only the Being by whom the world was made."*

The last order of our feelings, then, is comprehended under the name of *Emotions*. Our emotions are distinguished from our other states of mind, by a peculiar vividness, that cannot be defined, but which every one understands without the aid of a definition. In treating of the emotions, Dr. Brown departs from the method he had followed in examining the intellectual phenomena. He considers them in those complex conditions in which they generally exhibit themselves in the world, and have received certain definite characte-

* Lectures, vol. iii. pp. 27—30.

ristic names, and not in their elementary principles, though in the consideration of the separate affections he states the elements of which the complex whole is composed.

The Emotions may be considered as involving, and not involving some moral affection, and they may be considered, in their relation to time, as Immediate,—Retrospective,—Prospective. Under the head of the *Immediate* emotions, Cheerfulness and Melancholy,—Wonder and Languor,—Beauty, Sublimity, Deformity,—the Ludicrous, are treated with a moral eloquence and a metaphysical acuteness that cannot be sufficiently admired. Under the head of Wonder, he has demonstrated the existence of the sentiment as an original principle of our nature, and its essential sameness under the modified forms of Surprise and Astonishment, in opposition to the theory contained in Dr. Smith's posthumous volume. The lectures on Beauty, from the very interesting nature of the subject, and from the multitude of ingenious men who have speculated upon it, will be generally considered as the most valuable in this part of the course. The various questions connected with the theory of beauty, Dr. Brown has discussed with his usual elegance and acuteness. He has analysed the feeling; classed it in its proper place among the primitive emotions; examined into the circumstances in which it is excited; and pointed out the manner in

which it is influenced by association, in such a way as to leave but little for future inquirers in this department, except to trace the influence of the principles he has established in the various elegant arts, and to determine their modifications according to the character of different individuals.*

The second order of the *Immediate* emotions includes the feelings of Virtue and Vice, of Love, and Hatred, and of Sympathy. In this part of the course Dr. Brown does not enter particularly into the question of morals. He simply enumerates these emotions as parts of the mental phenomena, reserving the ethical discussions to which they give rise for the second part of his course.

Our *Retrospective* emotions have regard either to others or to ourselves. Those that relate to others may be comprehended under Gratitude and Anger; those that relate to ourselves comprehend the feelings for which we have not an appropriate name, but which are generally known by the appellation of a *good conscience*. Remorse also belongs to this order of our emotions.

* If Dr. Brown had lived to complete his *Physiology*, he intended to state in a note to sect. iv. chap. 2. that previously to the publication of the article Beauty, in the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, he had in the course of two different conversations explained very fully to the author of that article his views upon the subject.

The *Prospective* emotions are comprehensive of our Desires and Fears, the first having for their object some good, the second some evil. The most important of our desires are comprehended in the following series:—First, Our desire of continued existence, without any immediate regard to the pleasure it may yield. Secondly, Our desire of pleasure considered directly as mere pleasure. Thirdly, Our desire of action. Fourthly, Our desire of society. Fifthly, Our desire of knowledge. Sixthly, Our desire of power,—direct, as in ambition, or indirect, as in avarice. Seventhly, Our desire of the affection and esteem of those around us. Eighthly, Our desire of glory. Ninthly, Our desire of the happiness of others. And Tenthly, Our desire of the unhappiness of those whom we hate.

Of this part of Dr. Brown's course I have attempted nothing more than merely to give the titles of the various subjects, partly from the length to which this chapter has already extended, but partly also because there is not, as under the former orders of our affections, any one principle involving the greater part of the speculations; and because, the chief value of these lectures, consisting in the admirable pictures of life and manners which they contain, and the eloquent discussions with which he has intermixed them, in regard to the relation that this part of our nature bears to the goodness and wisdom of God, and to

the happiness and duties of man, no abridgment or analysis could convey any idea of their excellence. In a passage very characteristic of its author, and which, indeed, affords the key to the spirit with which he conducted his philosophical inquiries in general, he thus expresses himself.

"It was my wish, on a subject so important to the noblest feelings and opinions which you are capable of forming, to impress you with sentiments which seem to me far more necessary for your happiness than even for your instruction, and to present these to you at the time when the particular phenomena which we were considering, led most directly to these very sentiments. It was my wish too, I will confess, to accustom your minds as much as possible to this species of reflection, a species of reflection which renders philosophy not valuable in itself only, admirable as it is even when considered in itself alone, but still more valuable for the feelings to which it may be made subservient. I wished the great conceptions of the moral society in which you are placed, of the duties which you have to perform in it, and of that Eternal Being who placed you in it, to arise frequently to your mind, in cases in which other minds might think only that one phenomenon was very like another phenomenon, or very different from it; that the same name might, or might not, be given to both; and that one philosopher, who lived on a certain part of the earth at a certain time, and was fol-

lowed by eight or ten commentators, affirmed the phenomena to be different, while another philosopher, with almost as many commentators, affirmed them to be the same. Of this at least I am sure, that your observation of the phenomena themselves will not be less quick, nor your analysis of them less nicely accurate, because you discover in them something more than a mere observer or analyst, who inquires into the moral affinities with no higher interest than he inquires into the affinity of a salt or a metal, is inclined to seek; and even though your observation and analysis of the mere phenomena were to be, as only the ignorant could suppose, less just on that account, there can be no question that if you had learned to think with more kindness of man, and with more gratitude and veneration of God, you would have profited more by this simple amelioration of sentiment, than by the profoundest discovery that was to terminate in the accession which it gave to mere speculative science."*

The analysis that has been given of the first part of Dr. Brown's course, though necessarily imperfect, from the limits within which I was obliged to confine myself, and still more from my inability to do justice to the subject, will be sufficient, I trust, to enable the reader to form an idea of the principles upon which he conducted his inquiries, and of his analysis and arrangement

* Lectures, vol. iii. pp. 525, 526.

of the mental phenomena. It will enable us also to form some estimate of the merits of Dr. Brown as compared with former writers in this department of science, and upon this point I shall now proceed to offer a few observations.

In attending to the works of metaphysicians, one of the first circumstances that attracts our notice, is, that in scarcely any of them is our spiritual part considered as an object of mere physical science. In the systems of ancient philosophy there is scarcely to be found a single analysis of complex phenomena of thought and feeling. During the middle ages, though the knowledge of our mental frame was professedly cultivated with the most assiduous zeal, the intellectual science consisted of little more than the unmeaning terms of a profitless logic. And even after the *reformation* of philosophy, which left the inquirers into the material universe to the enlightened investigation of nature, it is melancholy to find how many ancient errors, and prejudices, and idols, perplexed and misled the metaphysicians. While the laws of matter have been patiently and sedulously examined simply on their own account, the laws of mind have, almost in every instance, been considered, not in their own essential light, but in reference to other sciences. Since the time of Descartes, indeed, the facts as to the mental phenomena have been gradually accumulating; but how few are there who have devoted themselves exclusively to the analysis of these facts,

and to the reducing them to general principles. The mind, in short, has been considered in its applications to other sciences, rather than as in itself presenting phenomena, the examination and arrangement of which constitute the most comprehensive of all the sciences. By many philosophers, the mind has been considered solely in reference to logic; by others, the principles of our nature have been investigated with a view to the confirmation of the great doctrines of natural theology; while not a few have made their theories subservient to the establishment of scepticism, or atheism, or materialism. The bent of the mind of Descartes was much more towards physics and mathematics than to metaphysics; and though his great principle, that it is by consciousness alone that we can become acquainted with our spiritual nature, will always entitle him to an exalted place among the benefactors of metaphysical science, there is little else in this science in which he can be considered as beyond his own age. His disciple Malebranche proposes wholly a practical end in his inquiries, and considers the human mind only with the view of putting his reader upon his guard against the various sources of error. Locke has confined himself to the understanding alone, or rather to the furniture of the understanding; and all his discussions are with an ultimate view, viz. to ascertain the origin, and extent, and

certainty of our knowledge. Dr. Reid may be considered as having pursued a method more agreeable to the spirit of Lord Bacon's philosophy, and, from various passages of his works, it is obvious that he had arrived at ideas of the object we ought to have in view in prosecuting analytically the study of man, that had hitherto been but imperfectly understood. At the same time, in all his investigations he had a further purpose, which, though it may heighten our respect for him as a man, or even as a philosopher, has very materially lessened his merits as a metaphysician. In examining the principles of our nature, it was not to reduce them to their utmost simplicity, so much as to vindicate, if I may be allowed to quote the expression of his illustrious disciple, "those fundamental laws of belief which form the groundwork of human knowledge, against the attacks made on their authority in some modern systems of scepticism."* † Mr. Stewart

* Stewart's Life of Reid, p. 59.

† It would be easy to prove, that though Dr. Reid had, perhaps, arrived at clearer views as to the end of the metaphysical philosophy than most of those who preceded him, he was far from considering metaphysics simply as an analytic science. I shall confine myself to two passages in his first essay, which are sufficient to prove that this was the case. In the seventh chapter, after showing, by a very acute analysis, that the ancient division of the intellectual powers into apprehension, judgment, and reasoning, was unsatisfactory, we find him retaining them all, and treating of them as separate. And, in the conclusion of the section, he expressly

has followed in the same path with Dr. Reid, with a moral eloquence, and an elevation of purpose, far beyond the praise of mere metaphysical acumen. But it is as a metaphysician that he is at present to be considered; and it is obvious, from the most superficial perusal of his productions, that as Dr. Reid was drawn away from what should be the main object of the mental physiologist, by a wish to establish the great principles that Mr. Hume had endeavoured to undermine; so Mr. Stewart has been seduced from the rigid speculations of pure metaphysics, by the more congenial task of applying what he conceived to be the philosophy of the mind to its practical uses. *

states, that he does not mean to "attempt a complete enumeration of the powers of the understanding. I shall only mention those *I propose to explain.*"

* The following extracts will exhibit Mr. Stewart's views upon this important point. "The question concerning the origin of our different affections, leads to some curious analytical disquisitions, but is *of very subordinate importance* to those inquiries which relate to their laws, and uses, and mutual references. In many ethical systems, however, it seems to have been considered as the most interesting subject of disquisition which this wonderful part of our frame presents." Life of Reid, p. 96.

"This has led some philosophers to suppose, that another faculty besides abstraction, to which they have given the name of generalization, is necessary to account for the formation of genera and species; and they have endeavoured to show, that although generalization, without abstraction, is impossible, yet that we might have been so formed as to be able to abstract without being capable of generalizing. *The grounds of this opinion it is not*

I am aware that besides these writers, who certainly are the first of a class that has been considered in this part of the island as holding the chief place in the science of metaphysics, there are others of a very different school, who may be supposed to have confined themselves more exclusively to the physical examination of the mental constitution. But in all these instances with which I am acquainted, the authors have, by an undue love of simplicity, or by connecting their speculations with some hypothesis as to the connection between matter and motion, and thought, given such an imperfect or distorted view of the operations of mind, that it is not necessary for my present purpose to allude to them particularly.

In making these remarks upon the systems of preceding philosophers, I would not be understood as undervaluing their labours, and still less as undervaluing those sciences, in their relations to which alone many of them have considered the phenomena of our spiritual nature. Many important facts had been observed, and these, in various instances, had been successfully referred to their general principles. But it must be obvious that the facts, as to human nature, would have been increased in a

necessary for me to examine for any of the purposes I have at present in view." Elements, vol. i. p. 159.

In his chapter on Memory, after mentioning that it may be doubtful whether remembrance is a simple or a complex act, he adds, that the question *is merely a matter of curiosity*. Ibid. p. 407.

degree which it is not easy to conceive, if the phenomena had been examined upon juster principles; and the advantages also resulting to the sciences of logic, and criticism, and education, and theology, would have been ultimately greater. There are indeed many conclusions that may be deduced from the obvious appearances of our mental constitution, without any analysis of these appearances, as there are many uses to which the general facts in regard to the air might be converted, though its gravity and component elements had not been discovered. But in the one case as well as in the other, the more minute our knowledge is, the more varied, and the more interesting are the uses to which it may be applied. And every new analysis of mind leads to many practical lessons, in regard to the conduct of the understanding, and to many important conclusions, in regard to the designs of Providence and the consequent obligations upon man. It will be more readily allowed that our acquaintance with the mind must become more intimate and accurate, when we devote ourselves, in the first place at least, exclusively to the examination of it; for it is obvious that when we consider its phenomena, with an ultimate object in view, we must see them in a contracted aspect, and many of their most important features will be lost in the shade.

Indeed, it is because metaphysicians have ex-

amined the mind with purposes altogether different, that such differences are to be found in their systems; a circumstance, which has been so often urged as an objection against the certainty or value of the science of Metaphysics itself. Our view of a subject is modified as much by the end we propose in our examination of it, as by its own essential qualities; and where the ends are numerous and varied, the subject will scarcely seem the same; at least, the truths in regard to it will appear unconnected, or perhaps inconsistent. This is exemplified in other sciences as well as in Metaphysics. In Botany, to take one of the most familiar ipstances, the essence of every system is determined by the end which its author proposes. How partial, and consequently how incorrect a view is taken of the vegetable kingdom, where there is a classification of the subjects of the science, according to their relations to other departments of knowledge. The interesting subjects of botanical knowledge are always the same, but when arranged according to their medicinal or economical uses, or according to their habits and methods of cultivation, the sciences that treat of them seem to have nothing in common. And it is not till lately that this has been ascribed to its true cause, viz. the different ends that the authors pursued.* The same account is

* For some excellent remarks upon this matter see *Théorie de la Botanique, par M. de Candolle*, p. 27:—by far the most philo-

to be given of the differences to be found in the various systems which go under the name of Metaphysics. These differences exist, not because the science of mind is one where no substantial truth is to be attained, but because the authors proposed to themselves ends essentially different. Their attention was thus directed to different parts of the varied phenomena; and even where they introduced the same phenomena, it was under the aspect that suited their peculiar purpose. In short, there are many sciences that relate to mind, though one vague name is applied to them all. Accordingly, in one author we have a theory of knowledge; in another an hypothesis as to the connexion between motion and thought; in a third an inquiry into the part of our mental frame which is connected with the fine arts. And it is no more an objection against the consistency and certainty of the physiology of mind, that such different views are espoused by writers who do not devote themselves exclusively to that science, than it is against the science of the physiology of vegetable life, that the medicinal, and economical, and geographical classifications, to be found in different writers, are marked by such diversities.

sophical work on the subject. See also Dr. Brown's Lectures, i. 362, where some admirable observations upon classification are to be found.

This then is the first circumstance, as I conceive, by which Dr. Brown's philosophy may be distinguished: He steadily and systematically keeps in view that the object of the metaphysician is to analyse all the phenomena of thought and feeling, and not to consider his object gained till he has reduced them to their utmost simplicity.

No one could be more impressed than Dr. Brown with the multitude of applications of which his favourite science admitted, and no one could be more ready to grant that these applications were often of more consequence than the mere physiological science. In the works of no author, accordingly, is there a more constant reference to the wisdom and beneficence of Him by whom all the successions of phenomena are originally determined, and of the duties that our capacities and susceptibilities render incumbent upon us. But still he never forgets that these are the applications of the science, and not the science itself; and that he is never to satisfy himself with an imperfect analysis, because, even while it is imperfect, important conclusions may be drawn from it. In consequence of this the discoveries he has made are much more numerous than those which rewarded the labours, or were the fruit of the genius, or the result of the good fortune of any former metaphysician. The practical applications of his system also, though not perhaps so obvious, are more numerous

and important than those of the systems which were constructed solely with a practical aim. In illustration of this, I shall refer to two instances merely in his writings. How much more light has been thrown upon the science of logic, in his remarks upon relative suggestion, than is to be found in the writings of those who had considered the human mind entirely in reference to the art of reasoning. By viewing the process of the mind in reasoning simply as one of the states of mind, his attention was undistracted; he saw the phenomena as they really are; the light of analogous states revealed their nature more clearly; and in this, as in every other part of our constitution, the best foundation for the improvement of our faculties is in an accurate knowledge of their nature.—His theory of Virtue also, is, for a similar reason, more satisfactory than any to be found in former metaphysical works. By attending to our moral sentiments as a part of our nature, and by analysing the words virtue, obligation, merit, with the aids that his doctrines as to relative suggestion afforded, he has shown the place that our feelings of virtue occupy in our mental frame, and by considering them along with our other immediate emotions, he has drawn an irresistible argument in favour of their being primitive and universal sentiments of the heart. —This is the reward of all those who confide in nature, and follow her without seeking any

other benefit than what of her own accord she bestows. One of the most important, and at the same time one of the most difficult lessons which the philosopher has to learn is, that he should observe nature with a mind unprejudiced with anticipations or fears as to what may be the result of his observations, or rather in the undoubting belief that whatever he discovers to be true must lead to beneficial consequences. The necessity of this *singleness* of vision, if I may borrow a scriptural metaphor, seems to pervade all the works of God, and is equally necessary in sense, and reason, and faith. *Homo naturae minister et interpres, tantum facit et intelligit quantum de naturae ordine, re vel mente observaverit, nec amplius scit aut potest.** That this holds true in metaphysics no less than in physics, is perhaps the most valuable of the conclusions to be deduced from Dr. Brown's works. It is said that Newton accounted for his valuable discoveries, by saying that he "waited for thought:" by which, I presume, that he must have meant that after placing the object of his investigation before his mind, he left his faculties to their unconstrained operation. And in laying down rules for reasoning and for conduct, we must *wait* till we observe the processes of nature, and let our rules be nothing more than the generalizing of the facts we have observed.

* Novum Organon.

The next circumstance that distinguishes Dr. Brown's philosophy is the great principle upon which he commences his inquiries, that we know nothing of the mind but as it exists in certain states, and that the thoughts, feelings, and powers of the mind are not different from the mind, but are merely the mind itself existing in different states.

The value of this principle can be duly estimated only by those, who have traced the effects of the prejudices to which it is opposed, upon the inquiries of former metaphysicians. There are, I conceive, two tendencies to error, one or other of which, according to the view that was taken of the mental phenomena, has vitiated the conclusions of almost all the inquirers into mind. The first is that of considering our thoughts apart from the thinking mind. The influence of this tendency is to be observed in the writings of all the ancient philosophers who have directed their attention to the spiritual universe. Conceiving that our ideas have a real existence, and that they are resemblances of outward objects, they made them the subject of a separate science. It was not so much the mind that they examined, as a separate department of existences, mysteriously intermediate between matter and mind. Their inquiries in this department exhibited the same fundamental errors that characterised their researches into the material universe. Instead of

first observing the phenomena, and then deducing such conclusions as their observations warranted, they followed the reveries of their own imaginations, without any definite ideas of the proper object of philosophical inquiry, or of the great principles of philosophising. Or rather, building upon hastily observed and ill-digested facts, they made them the foundation of theories that they were not sufficient to support. Even admitting that ideas had a real existence, they neglected the only means of arriving at the knowledge of them; and wasted their extraordinary powers in inquiring into their nature, their origin, and their rank in the scale of entities, without ascertaining the obvious and simple facts that might be observed regarding them.

Though the peripatetic doctrine, which accounts for perception, by species or ideas proceeding from external things and transmitted to the mind through the channel of the senses, seems to have been universally abandoned by philosophers after the revival of letters, it was still supposed by many, that ideas were entities altogether distinct from the mind. Indeed, as we have seen, it has till lately been very generally supposed, in this part of the island, that Dr. Reid was the first philosopher who clearly showed that there is no foundation for supposing that ideas have a separate existence. His claim to this merit it is not necessary again to refer to. That there have

been philosophers who maintained the position, which Dr. Reid conceived all the philosophers in modern times who preceded him to have maintained, is certain; and the prejudices that misled these individuals have exerted, and even in our own times continue to exert an influence upon many, who have not actually fallen into the same error.*

Dr. Brown has clearly stated, that our sensations, thoughts, feelings, opinions, judgments, are merely different states of the mind itself, and thus has completely removed the difficulty that has been a stumblingblock to many in the commencement of their metaphysical career. And in so far as I know, he is the first who has placed the subject in its true aspect. The arguments by which he supports his opinion have been stated in the former part of this chapter; and those who have seen the force of these arguments, cannot fail to be convinced also of the importance of the conclusion they establish.

But there is another prejudice opposed to the simple view of mind given by Dr. Brown, as nothing different from its thoughts, or feelings, or powers, or susceptibilities. I allude to that which leads us to conceive that the mind consists of powers or faculties, having as it were a distinct and independent existence. Dr. Reid may be considered as the representative of that class of

* See Note O.

philosophers, who, in their writings, appear to give countenance to this prejudice. That Dr. Reid really believed the powers of the mind to be distinct from the mind itself, I am far from supposing; but certainly his language would often seem to warrant the conclusion that this doctrine was maintained by him; and there can be no doubt whatever that the prejudice exerted a very powerful influence upon his inquiries. In so far as we proceed upon the idea that the powers of the mind are distinguishable from the mind itself, and from one another, the error of the assumption is so obvious as to render a refutation of it unnecessary. There is scarcely any metaphysician of any name who has not thought it necessary to put his readers upon their guard against it; and Mr. Stewart himself has referred to the often quoted passage of Locke,* so explicit and so conclusive upon the subject. But it has been seen that the prejudice is founded upon a principle of our nature; and it often operates in those who seem most fully aware of its existence. In so far as it supposes a voluntary control over our ideas, it is, as we have pointed out in regard to the power of abstraction, not only inconsistent with the fact, but actually involves a contradiction. But independently of this, the phraseology that it employs is calculated to satisfy the mind

* Book ii. ch. 21, § 6.

with imperfect analyses of the mental phenomena, and to exhibit them through an obscure medium. Even Locke himself, when speaking of the idea of perception, instead of endeavouring to explain the parts of which it is composed, refers us to our own consciousness upon the subject. It is obvious that by such a reference there might at once be an end of all metaphysical inquiry. Every one who is acquainted with his own language, must have a sufficiently distinct knowledge, of what is meant by the words expressive of the operations of the mind, for the ordinary purposes of life. But a man may possess this knowledge and yet be altogether ignorant of the *science* of metaphysics, the object of which is to analyse the feelings expressed by complex words, and to arrange them with analogous feelings. To put us fully upon our guard against the fallacies of language, in this particular, is therefore a merit of a very high order; and it is a merit to the honour of which Dr. Brown is fully entitled. But there is a merit still greater, and that is, not merely to put us upon our guard against the fallacies of language, but against the prejudices in which these fallacies have their origin. This, as we have seen in the analysis of his theory of Power, Dr. Brown has effectually done; and the influence of this may be judged of by the clearer views that every one must have of the processes of thought after perusing his works.

It is from these two circumstances taken together, and kept steadily in view, that the great merit of Dr. Brown's system arises;—that the great object of the metaphysician is to analyse and classify the phenomena of thought, and that the powers and thoughts of the mind are in reality nothing but the mind itself existing in different states. These doctrines themselves appear very obvious when they are stated; and perhaps no metaphysician of any name for nearly a century past, had he clearly understood the terms in which they are conveyed, would have disputed them. But it is one thing to assent to a truth when it is distinctly stated, and another to have previously such a hold of it as to be guided by it in all our speculations. Accordingly, though an approach to the same doctrines may be found in the writings of some preceding philosophers, it is easy to see prejudices, of a nature exactly contrary, shackling the efforts of their genius. In this respect, then, Dr. Brown has made a most important step in the principles of philosophising, perhaps the most important that has been made in metaphysics since the time of Descartes.

The classification which Dr. Brown has made of the mental phenomena is such as might have been expected from the principles upon which he proceeds. It is perfectly original, but at the same time it is simple, and distinct, and complete. The division into external and internal affections is natural and obvious; though I must state that

in the progress of that part of physiological science that relates to the functions of the brain, I conceive that discoveries have been made which affect some of Dr. Brown's principles of arrangement in this part of his system. But this remark applies in no degree to the division of the internal affections into intellectual states and emotions. No advancement of science can remove this distinction. They are felt by us as generically different, and must always thus be felt by us. The minor division of the intellectual states into conceptions and feelings of relation, is also clearly founded on a natural difference in the two classes of affections. It is impossible for me to enter farther into the merit of his various analyses of particular states of mind that had formerly been distinguished as separate faculties. I can only observe, in general, that they all appear to be extremely ingenious and accurate. In regard to the various divisions of this part of his system, his remarks upon the senses are perhaps the most original and ingenious; those upon the relative suggestions the most useful; and those upon the emotions the most eloquent and most likely to be generally interesting.

Upon the whole, I would observe, in regard to Dr. Brown's arrangement, that it is the first that ever had any fair pretensions to accuracy and completeness. All the previous divisions I am acquainted with, erred, either through too

great simplicity, by which things were brought together, which had no real resemblance—or through too great division, by which things that were specifically the same, were arranged as different. I cannot at present, after the length to which this chapter has already extended, find room for establishing this by a comparative view of the different systems of metaphysics that have successively been advanced. I can, however, very confidently refer the reader to the works of preceding metaphysicians, and upon comparing them with that of Dr. Brown, I feel convinced that they will agree that I have not ascribed to his system more merit than it is fully entitled to. In the mean time, it will be observed, that what I claim for Dr. Brown is, an analysis of the mental phenomena infinitely more minute and accurate than was ever before made, and the only arrangement of them into orders and classes that is at all founded on philosophical principles. I can easily imagine that more minute, and perhaps more accurate analyses of particular phenomena may be made, and that much may be done in arranging our *conceptions* and *feelings of relation*, (or, in the language of Dr. Brown, the phenomena of simple and relative suggestion,) into distinct species, but the general division seems so much according to nature, that though I can conceive that a different, perhaps a more correct nomenclature may be in-

troduced, I confess I cannot anticipate the time when the division itself will be superseded.

The second great division of Dr. Brown's course comprehends the doctrines of general ethics. We do not know all which is to be known of the mind, when we know all its phenomena. "When we know that man has certain affections and passions, there still remains the great inquiry, as to the propriety or impropriety of those passions, and of the conduct to which they lead. We have to consider, not merely how he is capable of acting, but also whether, acting in the manner supposed, he would be fulfilling a duty or perpetrating a crime." *

The third department † of the science of mind comprehends, according to Dr. Brown's division, the doctrines of Political Economy.

The fourth and last of the sciences of which the philosophy of mind is comprehensive, is Natural Theology.

These divisions present very great attractions, both in the paramount interest of the subjects, and in the moral eloquence with which they are treated. My limits, however, forbid me to enter upon them. I shall merely observe, in general, that the manner in which he explains what is to be understood by moral distinctions, and the arguments by which he establishes that the feelings of the difference

* Lectures, vol. i. p. 9.

† This part of his course Dr. Brown did not live to complete.

between virtue and vice form a part of our constitution, are of the greatest value. And the masterly review that he gives of the systems of Mandeville, Hobbes, Clarke, Wollaston, Hume, Smith, Paley, Price, and many others, will always be looked upon as an admirable specimen of enlightened criticism, dexterous logic, and sound morality. In the practical department of the science of ethics, he adopts the usual division; and though the subject does not admit of the same delicacy of analysis or profoundness of reasoning as some others, this part of his course contains much original matter, the motives to virtue are brought forward with great ingenuity, and the virtues themselves are painted with a glow of generous feeling that, in itself, is felt to be one of the most powerful motives to virtue.

In the part of his course that relates to natural theology, Dr. Brown has introduced an argument for the immateriality of the soul, that may be numbered among the happiest efforts of metaphysical subtlety. The arguments for the immortality of the soul and the being of a God are also ably stated.

His last two divisions, from the nature of the subjects, will probably be most popular; though I am inclined to think that the first division may be referred to, as bearing the most numerous and indubitable marks of his genius.

I am here enabled, by the kindness of a friend to gratify the reader with a brief but masterly criticism on the lectures, contained in an extract from a letter of an individual at present in India. It would add to the interest of the extract, if I were allowed to give the name of the ingenious author; but the remarks will be found to possess a value independent of that which any name could bestow.

* * * * *

"Having now mentioned most of the particulars of importance to ourselves, I shall devote a page to some remarks on the literary provision you have made me. It was not till near the end of March that the box arrived. I was a little disappointed in finding that Mr. Stewart's Dissertation was not completed, but that will come in its due time. His age is now advanced, and his great work still remains to be carried through its most interesting and important branch, and that which, in my humble belief, he is most peculiarly qualified to execute. I have read very few articles of the Encyclopædia, my curiosity being chiefly drawn to your friend's great work. I began to read Brown in March, and have lately finished the perusal of his hundred lectures. This is a poor progress compared to my reading at Edinburgh, when I should have devoured the whole in a week. My reading is much interrupted by business; and even now,

when I have gone through the course of Brown's instructions, I have still only a general and confused apprehension of his principles. A second and third perusal will remove this; but his philosophy is really obscured by his poetry. Great as his reasoning powers are, his imagination transcends them. The mortal eye is dazzled by the splendour of his imagery; for, however paradoxical it may sound, I must say, his poetry is even less poetical than his prose. It is not, as in Ferguson's work, of which Gray said, it contained uncommon strains of eloquence; but this is, throughout, one strain of high-toned poetical enthusiasm; *visions more than Plato saw.*

"My admiration of his eloquence, however, does not diminish the just estimation of the soundness of his philosophy, when my comprehension can grasp its principles. Always acute and ingenious, he is often original and profound. The subjects upon which he evinces most original thinking, are, in my humble apprehension, the following: The fallacy of belief in immediate perception of visible figure—the demonstration that our notion of extent involves that of time—the refutation of Hume and Hartley's theory of association—the refutation of nominalism, and placing general notions in their real bases—the demonstration of the insufficiency of Smith's theory to explain the appearances of our moral con-

stitution, and the clear statement of the combination of sentiment and thought which produces the conscience. In this last, I think, the difference from Hutcheson is very faint, and I would rather follow Stewart's explanation.—Much more original matter, no doubt, is contained in these lectures: I merely mention the above, as those points which have most forcibly attracted my attention. His exposition of the great first truths, although not new, is luminous and convincing, while the exquisitely refined analysis by which he unravels our most complex notions, excites admiration and affords delight. He withdraws, very justly, much undue credit from Reid, for the windmill conflict with the ideal system, as that, however, as well as materialism, notwithstanding the attempt of Messrs. Hill, Haslam, and Laurence, may be fairly considered as gone to the grave of all the Capulets. In the present time, little interest is excited by the details of such *ignes fatui* which have so long deluded mankind."

* * * * *

As the lectures were not prepared for the press, they do not appear without some of the disadvantages of posthumous publications. There is an awkwardness in some of the forms of expression that immediately presents itself to the eye; though even this has a certain value,

as affording evidence of perfect genuineness. The recapitulatory statements also, being intended for the convenience of the auditors for whom the lectures were prepared, are not always to be found where the nature of the subject might suggest. It may be added, that the style occasionally bears the marks of the circumstances in which the author was placed; and the want of the benefit of notes may sometimes be experienced. Some other imperfections might perhaps be mentioned, but they are all of minor importance, and do not in any degree affect the essential excellencies. Indeed, considering the circumstances under which the work appears, it is matter of admiration that the defects should be so trivial; and that lectures, possessing so great and varied merits, should have been printed in the form in which they were prepared for the purposes of academical instruction, without requiring any alteration, is altogether without a parallel. For metaphysical subtlety, profound and liberal views, refined taste, varied learning, and philosophical eloquence, all under the guidance of a spirit breathing the purest philanthropy and piety, they may challenge comparison with any work that was ever published; and though the admirers of Dr. Brown may regret that they should not have received his last corrections, the circumstance is of little real

importance either to their value, or to his own fame; for it may be safely predicted, that even in their present form they will always continue a splendid monument of Dr. Brown's academical exertions, and be considered one of the most valuable accessions that was ever made to the Philosophy of Mind.

CHAPTER VII.

SUCCESSIVE PUBLICATIONS.

THE admiration of the extraordinary talents displayed by Dr. Brown in his lectures, which I experienced in common with all those who attended the Moral Philosophy class, made me very desirous of his acquaintance; and I was happy in having a much valued relative,* whose mother and brother had been amongst his earliest friends and correspondents, and whose own *meekness of wisdom* gave her such a place in his estimation as to secure a very favourable reception to any one whom she might introduce to his notice. From the time of my first interview he showed all that kindly attention by which his manners were characterised; and in a short period I had the happiness of en-

* The late Mrs. Welsh of Moffat, daughter of the Rev. W. Scott, late of Kirkpatrick Juxta. See p. 32.

joying the most habitual and familiar intercourse with him. I may, with great truth, apply to Dr. Brown the words of the younger Pliny, in speaking of an eminent philosopher of his time; *Penitus domi inspexi, amarique ab eo laboravi, etsi non erat laborandum. Erat enim obvius et expositus, plenusque humanitate quam praeccpit. Atque utinam sic ipse spem quam de me concepit impleverim, ut ille multum virtutibus suis addidit. At ego nunc illas miror, quia magis intelligo, quanquam ne nunc quidem satis intelligo.* *

I still fondly dwell upon the many happy and profitable hours spent in his society, and I shall ever look upon it as a happiness and an honour that I succeeded in securing a place in his friendship. To be admitted into the familiar intercourse of a man of virtue and genius,—to see him in his hours of greatest relaxation, when all the restraints of public life are removed, scattering his various opinions upon life and manners in fresh and luxuriant fertility, as out of a soil impregnated with all the seeds of wisdom and goodness, may be considered as one of the greatest enjoyments of life. "Who shall describe," says a celebrated living poet, in alluding to his acquaintance with another living poet of equal eminence, "who shall describe all that he gains in the so-

* Plin. Ep. lib. i.

cial, the unrestrained, and the frequent conversations with a friend who is at once communicative and judicious, whose opinions upon all subjects of literary kind are founded on good taste and exquisite feeling!"* In speaking upon a similar subject, Dr. Johnson has expressed himself with a greater warmth of feeling than usual, and his words, in regard to an old and respected friend, with some few omissions, I may literally apply in the present instance. "Of Gilbert Walmsley thus presented to me let me indulge myself in the remembrance. I knew him very early; he was one of the first friends that literature procured me, and I hope that at least my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

"His studies had been so various, that I am not able to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquaintance with books was great; and what he did not immediately know he knew at least where to find. Such was the amplitude of his learning, and such his copiousness of communication, that it may be doubted whether a day now passes in which I have not some advantage from his friendship."†

It might be expected that my narrative should now become fuller and more interesting from the intimacy that began to subsist between us. But

* Crabbe.

† Lives of the Poets.

every thing like incident in Dr. Brown's life terminated with his appointment to the chair of Moral Philosophy, and the nature of our intercourse afforded but few materials for biography. What I witnessed in the course of my acquaintance with him, "affords matter for praise," to use the words of a biographer of Barrow, "rather than narrative." The peaceful and improving hours that are spent in the happiness of domestic privacy, owe their greatest charm to the very absence of events calculated to gratify curiosity; and the features of his domestic life, it would require the exquisite delicacy, and fidelity, and warmth, of his own pencil to portray. The more that my memory dwells upon the years of our acquaintance, the more I feel my inadequacy to the task of conveying any idea of that union of moral and intellectual excellencies which adorned his character, and which made his house at once a school for the intellect, and a home to the heart.

There is something indeed in the society of every man of high intellectual endowments, which is to be found only in his society, and which no description can preserve; as the flavour of some fruits is found in perfection only when we pluck them from the tree. I do not allude merely to the advantage and happiness of social intercourse, arising from the exercise of the

kindlier affections, the refinements of polished life, the never-resting and intermingling lights of peaceful affection, and easy playfulness, and softened wisdom—the *seria mixta cum jocis*—but to a peculiar liveliness and distinctness, in our perception of truth itself, to which, in such circumstances we attain. The attractive grace that the soft and flitting lights of gaiety and kindness shed upon the forms of truth seems to give them a readier way to our assent. And every one who has enjoyed the converse of a man of philosophic genius, must often have experienced a comprehensiveness and clearness in his views, beyond what either books or meditation can bestow. This is to be ascribed partly to that sympathy, by which our faculties are stimulated into a corresponding activity. But it is also in a great measure owing to this circumstance, that, besides those obstacles, in the inquiry after truth, that are common to all, every individual has peculiar difficulties arising from his mental conformation, to which, in their multiplied diversities, the arguments contained in books cannot be accommodated. But in actual conversation, the penetration of the philosopher enables him to detect and to dispossess the special *idol* of our mind. He suits his discussion to the peculiar conformation of our intellect. And the influence of his presence is felt, not merely in the new truths that he

presents to us, but in his removing the impediments that checked the activity of our faculties. In consequence of this, while the more obvious features in the social character of every great man may be preserved and made obvious to all, there are other traits that are altogether indefinable; and these, too, are what each individual, had he been present, would have valued most, as speaking to his own intelligence. Though the excellence is the same in reality, yet it is felt as different by each, being accommodated to each individually. Bacon says, that the best part of beauty is what a painter cannot express. And the recorded conversation of a man of genius can no more convey an idea of the effect of that conversation upon those who actually enjoyed it, than the art which is able to make the eye of his portrait seem to gaze at once upon all, can convey the feeling which each individual in the presence of the original experienced from his living glance of affection and intelligence.

As Dr. Brown's conversational style was not less correct than his written discourse, and exceedingly fluent, those parts of his works, where the subjects admit of being treated in a more familiar manner, may, in some instances, convey a tolerably correct idea of his language in company. But the many pleasing episodes and breaks in his discussions—the elegant turns of wit—the playful per-

sonal applications with which he knew how to relieve what might otherwise have become tedious, but which were still felt to be kind even when apparently most satyrical; and above all, the accommodation that he made of his views and arguments according to the character of those with whom he was conversing cannot be preserved. I shall not endeavour to convey any idea of his conversational talents. But I may here introduce some of his opinions upon various subjects in criticism and philosophy which I have preserved, and for which I may not find a more appropriate place. In several instances, the opinions I heard him express had been committed to writing, and where this is the case, I shall quote from his manuscript.

1812. November.—In speaking of German literature, he made many very admirable remarks upon some of the most distinguished authors, with great power of expression. The substance of his remarks upon Leonora is contained in the following extract from a MS. volume, which he has entitled "Critical Remarks on Works of Rhetoric and Belles Lettres."

"—The measure to an English ear is peculiarly dissonant, but after frequent perusal, the roughness has not merely ceased to be disagreeable to me, but has even, in relation to the horrors of the fable, a stern grace superior to

the smoother melody of our English translations. When nature is all rugged before us in the wild amplitude of cloud-hid mountains, and overhanging rocks and chasms, through whose dark depth the eye cannot penetrate, we do not expect to hear the feeble whispering of a meadow rivulet. It is to the thunders of the torrent, broken and majestic as the craggy eminence from which it descends, that we listen with a fearfulness of pleasure which harmonises with the general awe.

"The most striking imperfections of Leonora arise from that dramatic form, to which the ballad, as a species of composition, owes much of its interest. The feelings of the persons introduced are not left to our imagination to be suggested by the circumstances described, but are immediately presented to our sympathy in dialogues to which they are supposed to give rise. We cannot therefore refrain from astonishment at the readiness with which Leonora acquiesces in the singular proposal of her lover. That his courser paws, and that some friends are assembled, is but a poor reason for undertaking a journey of a hundred miles, without any preparation, in the darkness of midnight. She obeys, however. She does not even bid farewell to her affectionate mother. But she springs on the horse, clasps her lover, and without being astonished at the singular description of the wedding, hastens

away to join the marriage guests. The velocity of the motion, the frequent allusions to the swift riding of the dead, the funeral train, and the ghostly dancers which form her airy retinue, do not convince her that there is any supernatural agency, and there is not a single question of astonishment during the whole of her journey of death. The faults of the piece are, however, compensated by so many beauties, or rather awfulnesses, that it must retain the command of our fearful fancy long after the brood of spectres which it has begotten have sunk in that oblivion in which even spectres perish."

1814. December.—In speaking of a celebrated philosophical work, recently published, which I had been reading, I happened to express myself with considerable warmth of admiration. Dr. Brown, I observed, did not go along with me in my praises; and when I mentioned one particular chapter as very valuable, "Why, really," said he, "I am not quite sure that I recollect his doctrines upon that head; will you state *in a single sentence* what his views are." This I found no little difficulty in accomplishing. And I discovered that he took this method of leading me to perceive that there was a want of precision in my favourite author, and that I had allowed my admiration of his eloquence to make me forget a vagueness in his ideas, and an obscurity in some of

his statements. The critical doctrine implied in this short sentence of Dr. Brown was of so much advantage to me at that period of my studies, that I have recorded it for the benefit of those who may be at a similar stage in their academical course, though in other respects of little interest. Connected with his views of philosophical disquisition, however, it is valuable. I may here put together the substance of his ideas upon this subject, which I heard him at different times express.

He conceived that every philosophical writing ought to resemble a system of pyramids, each part a whole in itself, portions of which are to be grouped into larger pyramidal forms, which ought all to be so arranged as to constitute one great pyramid. In every sentence there ought to be a principal idea complete in itself, but forming an element of all the ideas that are joined into one paragraph. The idea of the paragraph is still one, which is to be grouped with all the other paragraphs into a section; the sections in their turn form larger divisions, which altogether constitute one mighty whole. To have a distinct view of all the particulars each in itself, and at the same time in their mutual references and in their united reference to the great whole, constitutes, as he conceived, an essential element of the philosophic genius. This was

what Dr. Brown himself constantly aimed at, and the effect of his system is to be observed in all his works. It was chiefly for this reason that he made use of a method of short hand, which he invented; the benefit of which he found to consist not merely in enabling him to put down his ideas rapidly, but also in the power thus given him by the extreme minuteness of the character of *taking in* the whole subject both with his eye and his mind at a single glance.

Some very valuable remarks upon this subject are contained in Locke's Conduct of the Understanding. I may take this opportunity of mentioning, however, that this was a work which he did not greatly value; and the reason he stated was, that there were few practical directions contained in it which would not occur to the student himself in the course of his own investigations. In forming this opinion, however, I conceive, that, as upon some other occasions, he did not make sufficient allowance for feebler and slower intellects. There are many rules in regard to the methods to be employed in the investigation of truth, that appear to men of quick and enlarged minds, as of a nature so elementary, and as so obviously and intuitively true, that it is not necessary to state them in words; which yet, to the great bulk of inquirers, are

found to be useful. The remark of Sir Joshua Reynolds respecting rules for painting, applies with as much truth in regard to rules for philosophising. And it may be added, that though common rules may be dispensed with by men of genius, yet as the great bulk of mankind are not men of genius, they are far from being unnecessary.

Many of the most distinguished literary characters of the age were visitors at Dr. Brown's house, and few foreigners of literary eminence came to Edinburgh without being introduced to him. This certainly made his acquaintance doubly valuable,—though his own society was so delightful that I was never happier than when I found him alone. It was usually in the evening that I waited upon him. His mother and sisters were generally present, and occasionally one or more visitors, who, like myself, were on such terms with the family, that they did not require the formality of an invitation. Nothing could be more delightful than an evening spent with this peaceful and accomplished family. It was impossible not to observe the attention Dr. Brown paid to all; the art with which he made every one feel at home; and his own manners so gracefully varying with the varying theme. The tones of his voice were extremely pleasing. He conversed with the greatest

fluency on every topic.* When the subject was of importance, his manners were animated and powerful; when about trifles, playful, with a happy turn of wit and elegance of expression. His kindly consideration encouraged every one to state his sentiments with confidence and freedom; and even when he refuted the opinions that he did not agree with, he did it so as not to offend the most delicate self-love, and poured into the mind such a flood of light, that personal defeat was forgotten in the delight of the perception of truth. When only his own family were present, he would frequently take up any book that happened to be lying on the table, or to which reference might be made, and read such passages as he had marked, with many passing observations, and always courting remark in return.

1818. May.—A Professor of Greek from a foreign university being present, there was much conversation upon the subject of language, and upon the advantages to be derived from studying different languages. Mr. ——— regretted that all mankind did not speak the same language. Dr. Brown, on the other hand, pointed out the advantages that arose from the variety of tongues, in the facilities thus afforded us in the study of the mind, in the clue that is given for trac-

* Mira in sermone, mira etiam in ore ipso vultuque suavitas.

ing the current of human thought, and also in the lights that are shed upon national character.

"Language may be divided into the *analytic* and the *synthetic;* the first as in the English *I have loved,* expressing by separate signs the parts which enter into the composition of the thought; the second combining the person, the time, the action, in a single word *amavi.* The poetical advantage which the latter enjoys is evident. As the simple word must be variously modified, and can be susceptible of modification only by considerable length, there is more of polysyllabic pomp and varied euphony, than in languages in which the same auxiliary terms are necessarily of frequent recurrence; and in which, therefore, there must be either a redundance of monosyllables, or an insupportable tediousness of expression. But the superiority is peculiarly manifest in the narrative of impetuous action. The description is given with all the velocity of the agent. We are not mere spectators, we are hurried along in the midst of the conflict. The ardour of the warrior, the fall of the rock, the course of the torrent are before us in a single word. It is picture more than poetry, or rather it unites the excellencies of both, the sudden comprehensiveness of a single scene with unbroken continuity of action."*

* Extracted from his MSS.

He considered the Latin as affording the best example of *synthetic* language, and conceived it to be indispensably necessary for every author to keep up a constant familiarity with the Latin classics, if he would be preserved from that diffuseness which is the besetting sin of modern literature.

To compose frequently in Latin, both in prose and verse, he conceived to be of importance, not merely for perfecting our knowledge of the language, and enabling us to enjoy the beauties of the classic authors, but also for enlarging our knowledge of the human mind, and for acquiring and maintaining habits of close thinking. The habit of comparing different languages, of studying the genius of each, and of endeavouring to express the niceties of other languages by corresponding elegancies in our own, was considered by him as attended with the greatest advantages.

He also recommended it as a useful practice, to take any work of eminence in our own language, and after a careful perusal of a brief portion, to close the book, and endeavour to clothe the ideas in our own words.* Not that the translation is to be committed to writing. This he considered to be so laborious that it might be dispensed with.

* He conceived that every individual had his own style, into which we must *translate*, as it were, the works even of our own authors before we can fully understand them.

But the mental process he looked upon as indispensable. Besides its effect in improving the taste, in giving us a command of words and imagery, in fixing the attention upon beauties that might otherwise have escaped our notice, and in inspiring us with higher ideas of excellence, he considered it as calculated to enlarge very considerably our knowledge of the human mind.

One of his MS. volumes he has entitled *A Chaos*. It is without a date, but from various circumstances it appears to have been written at a very early period of his life,—certainly before he had reached his twenty-first year. The volume is of considerable size; but only a small part of it is completed. It consists of thoughts upon various subjects apparently committed to writing as they occurred. A few extracts may not be unacceptable to the reader.

"What is essential to wit? Though volatile and various it may surely be analysed. It is in truth a species of philosophy, and consists in the development of an unexpected relation. But unexpected relations are frequently discovered in the examination of different productions of art, which do not excite the feeling of wit. This is, perhaps, because we pass immediately from the perceived relation to the examination of causes and effects. We reason as soon as we feel. It is a titillation which affects us only when our mind is vacant, and of which we are insen-

sible when our faculties are strongly employed; nor is this merely a slight analogy. The feeling produced by tickling, in its glow and propensity to laughter, has a close resemblance to the pleasure of wit. The feeling of wit we may therefore define to be the *quick perception* of an unexpected relation, not complex, but of which the whole is immediately perceived, and which does not lead by other analogies to the contemplation of other relations."——

"As wit consists in unexpected similarity, so there is a kind of humour which consists in unexpected discrepancy, and which seems to excite the same feelings, the same pleasure, the same external signs of that pleasure. Such is the humour of action when we see any one in a grotesque appearance. We laugh when we see a person fall, not from any depravity of our nature, but from our sensibility of the discrepant. If we saw any one enter a drawing room, with his face unknowingly blackened, our propensity to laughter would be irresistible, and which shows the justness of the cause above stated, the propensity would be greater in proportion to the number and splendour of the company."——

"The evil of frequent public executions in brutalizing the mind, and in counteracting the great end of punishment, its preventive influence, by making us acquainted with that which we dread, instead of having attached to it the mysterious

awfulness of a thing unknown, has long been felt. But private execution, it is said, would not be tolerated in a free country; because there would not be security against torture. Might not this be obviated by the presence of the jury at execution? A duty certainly painful, but rendered easier by the reflection, that it is for public good."——

"Perfect rights are by some considered as differing from the imperfect, in this circumstance, that in the former there is not merely an obligation, but on the other side a right corresponding. This distinction, however, is founded on an artificial distinction. There is a right in the one case more than the other, merely because there is, in one case only, the sanction of law. The true difference is merely, that in a case of justice all the circumstances may be defined with some degree of accuracy, as not depending on shades of motives; but in the other virtues these are so delicate and so various, that they cannot with propriety be reduced to the precision of law."——

"The *false* is the discordant, the *ridiculous* is also the discordant, and differs from the *false* only in being confined to animated nature. It is a species, and the false is the genus which comprehends it. The ridiculous is, therefore, not merely the test, but the essence of the false in action. Discordance may indeed be perceived where it is not real, but so may truth in general; and

those who argue against ridicule as the test of truth in manners, however unwilling they may be to confess it, are of the same school as the more daring sceptics who assert, that there is no truth, because our intellectual perception is liable to mistake. In both cases we have reason to believe that the error is not in the comparison, but in the ideas compared. We see falsehood where it is not, because we have omitted or added some circumstance; and a noble character appears ridiculous because it is seen not as it really is, but with features which do not belong to it."——

"Many striking circumstances have been related of persons who, when engaged in an important affair, as in a lawsuit, have, in a dream, thought of some particular of great consequence, as of the place in which an old paper was deposited, and have thus been led to believe in supernatural interference. The true explanation in this case seems to be, that they have before known something with respect to the circumstance discovered, though in their waking hours it had escaped their memory. Even in our waking hours we remember at one time what at others was forgotten; and in sleep the circumstances which favour recollection are still more striking. For when awake our attention is distracted by a thousand objects, while in sleep the regular train of associations is unimpeded by external impression. The light connections, therefore, of contiguity,

may be renewed in a dream, though the power of the connection, to use a mechanical metaphor, may not have been sufficient to resist the force of light and sound, and the more vivid and permanent emotions excited by the business of the active day."——

"To the use of religion, as one of the great parts of the complicated machinery employed in the production of general happiness, it is objected, that the vindictive hatred of vice, so necessary to the preservation of virtue, is diminished by the thought that the criminal is to be punished for the same fault by a judge more terrible in his wrath, and less bounded by time, than those whose sentence extends only over a small portion of the criminal's existence. The effect, however, will surely be contrary, if the justice of God, as well as his power and disposition to punish, be admitted by the pious believer; for the idea of deserved punishment being thus continually associated with the idea of offence, all the disagreeable feelings which attend the idea of punishment will be suggested by that of guilt, and will thus render it doubly hateful in the same manner as the idea of poverty becomes doubly hateful to those who could submit to the absolute physical privations which it causes, from suggesting the disagreeable feelings excited by that contempt which usually follows indigence. There is also another mode in which religion acts in the aggravation of

moral guilt. It furnishes a new relation which is violated; and we hate the sinner not merely for injuring man whom we love, but for contemning likewise the adorable Being whom we revere. That man is frequently led by creeds and rituals to console himself in the mysterious pomp of complicated forms, for his neglect of the simple principles of useful activity, is a remark unfortunately verified by experience. But this only tends to show still more clearly the influence of religious opinion if properly directed. It is a concurring force which adds equally to the momentum of bodies, whether the line in which they move be that of virtue or of vice. If the religion of Moloch could lead the half-unwilling mother in dreadful procession to the fire which was about to receive the infant that clung smiling round her neck, can we suppose that a religion of benevolence would be scorned, which, mixing the solemnity of divine command with the sweet eloquence of nature, should teach the parent that his purest worship was protection of that helplessness which Heaven had trusted to his love? Would desire be rendered less powerful by the addition of new motives, and virtue cease when it became devotion? Is there so great a love of misery in man that he would submit to the feverish repose of a bed of spikes, that he would lacerate his limbs with daily penance, and consume his strength with the pangs of voluntary hunger, while with

the same motives of obedience to the awarder of eternity, he would be unwilling to partake of the luxury of tranquil life, and to praise with the thankfulness of enjoyment! But the most important effect of religion is the reality which it gives to the idea of obligation. The belief of the doctrine of necessity prepares the mind for the denial of any essential difference of morality; and it is the advantage of piety, that it arrests scepticism in this most dangerous of its stages, by referring to the sanction of the divine will: we believe, and we cease to inquire. Let those who deny the utility of religion conceive a world without it, a world of Inquirers, of Necessarians, of Indifferentists. They will find comfort in reflecting, that it is not the scene around them, but a picture of imagination, and will allow the importance of that principle which, if it be false, preserves from the evils of truth, and checks inquiry only where inquiry is dangerous."——

"Where many suffrages are to be collected, much ridicule has been thrown on the mode of ascertaining a general question by separate votes on each of the questions comprehended in it. Yet this is certainly the only mode of collecting truth if a majority of voices be regarded as the test of truth. If A claim and be opposed by B, who adduces fourteen objections to the right asserted, for each of which objections, one of fourteen judges gives his vote, discarding all the rest,

the claim of A will be rejected according to the one mode of proceeding, and according to the other sustained. Yet the probability is as fourteen to one, that each of the objections is false. Is it not wiser, therefore, to follow the mode of separate suffrage, since the propositions are in truth separate, and the general question, as it is called, is nothing more than a short and convenient language by which, to aid our memory, we tie up in one parcel the separate propositions? The instance given by Lord Dreghorn of four people, who all disliked a bowl of punch presented to them, one thinking it too sweet, another too sour, another too strong, another too weak, yet were seduced by separate questions into acquiescence in its goodness, is even against his own side of the question; for, from the statement given, it is more probable that the punch was good, and if it had been decided to be *bad* by general suffrage, as *bad*, in relation to punch, means nothing more than too great strength, weakness, sweetness, sourness, &c. the decision would either have been unjust, or the opinion of one of the parties that it was too sweet, is stronger evidence than the opinion of the other three that the sweetness was exactly proportioned, or in some other of the qualities essential to badness of punch, the voice of one must have been preferred to that of three." ——

"If the fact which Professor Robison mentions

of a peculiar tune exciting a clamorous howling in all the dogs of the spaniel breed be true, it furnishes, by irresistible analogy, a proof of musical taste independent of all association, as we cannot suppose the circumstances in which all the spaniels have been placed to have any peculiar and exclusive resemblance."——

"It cannot be considered as a just diagnostic of minerals, that all their parts have the same qualities as the *whole* of which they are parts. What is capillary attraction when the tube is flattened to a plane? and what necessary resemblance can be traced in the effects of bodies *combined* to those of the separate ingredients? An animal vessel is a compound body, all the similar parts of that tube have similar powers; but if the composition or structure be changed, the effects are different. The same may be said of any compound mineral body; the similar parts have similar powers, the dissimilar have different. And the general proposition can then only be established when we have become intuitively certain of the elementary simplicity of any organ, and have observed a difference of phenomena with every difference of apposition."——

"The name of the cuckoo has generally been considered as a very pure instance of imitative appellation. But in giving that name, we have most unjustly defrauded the poor bird of a portion of its very small variety of sound. The

second syllable is not a mere echo of the first; it is the sound reversed, like the reading of a sotadic line; and to preserve the strictness of imitation we should give it the name of Ook-koo."——

"Light in passing from one medium to another of unequal density, is not wholly transmitted, but is in part reflected at the usual angle of reflection. May not this be considered as a proof, that the body which, at the same time, gives and refuses passage to light of the same kind, is not strictly homogeneous; and may it not therefore be adopted as a negative test of elementality, even when there are no other circumstances from which composition may be inferred?"——

"The greater refracting powers of combustible bodies is certainly a proof of the greater *chemical* affinity of such bodies to light. It proves, too, that chemical action takes place beyond the particles in immediate apparent contact, the change of direction, in every case of apparently immediate refraction, being in truth curvilinear. As the combustible body thus shows in every case a peculiar affinity to light, does it not furnish, when all other circumstances are equal, a presumption in favour of the hypothesis, that the light in burning is not given out by the oxygen gas, which does not in any case of transmission peculiarly attract the passing light; but by that substance, which has constantly shown such attraction, and which therefore may be supposed to part with it

merely from the greater affinity of the oxygen applied, or rather from the double election to which the caloric of the gas contributes?"——

"To those who contend that all our ideas are originally perceptions, and that proportions and similarities, and differences of external things, are not the results of the modifying mind, but the immediate impressions of qualities inherent in the bodies observed, may it not be urged as a decisive question, by what organ of sense the idea of *difference* is acquired? When I say a square is not round, the proposition is understood. Non-roundness, the idea suggested, is a quality of a square. But if it be a quality in the square itself, and if men have an organ capable of perceiving that quality, it would not be absurd to state, that a person, whose first perception was a square, perceived its non-roundness in the same manner as one who had before observed a circle! Non-roundness is not a perception, but an inference from former perceptions. It is not a mental affection immediately succeeding an organic affection, but one preceded immediately by other *mental* affections. If it were an organic affection, *difference* must either be the same A originally excited by the first organic affection B, which it is absurd to suppose when only one object has been perceived, or if it be different, as C, when B remains the same, the regularity of physical succession must have been suspended. Are we not,

therefore, forced to believe that there are general ideas, feelings of agreement or disagreement, *entogenes*, which result indeed from previous perceptions, *exogenes*, but which are in their nature as different from them, as, in the various changes of external nature, the phenomena of one period are allowed to be different from those by which they were preceded?"——

"The effect of humidity in bursting small capsules has frequently been observed. May not this be the cause of the increased fragrance of flowers in the evening, as there is at the period of inflorescence a copious precipitation of dew? It does not seem to depend on difference of temperature, as it takes place equally during the warmest sunshine, after a slight shower; nor is it probable that air merely, as having less moisture in it, should be a better solvent of aroma."——

"The distinctions which the Economists have endeavoured to introduce in political science, as it relates both to the real wealth of a nation, and to the consequent sources of revenue to the state, are surely founded on differences, which have themselves no relation either to the actual extent of national wealth, or the ultimate incidence of taxation. The arrangements of natural history, or of physics in general, have no value in political estimates, for whether time and capital be employed in the production of an increased quantity of a substance exactly resembling in its physical

properties, a part of that which was employed in its production, as in the multiplication of seed by the processes of husbandry; or be employed in giving new qualities to substances which it cannot produce, as in the processes of manufacture, if the demand for the produce of both be equal, an equal accession of wealth has in both cases been made. The urgency of the necessities relieved, and the real quantity of enjoyment afforded, are of no consequence to the political arithmetician, whatever they may be to the statesman. It is sufficient for mere arithmetic, that the demand be the same for the articles of necessity or luxury; and even if this distinction were justly admissible, there would be no room for the single division of productive and unproductive labour, but rather for a continued and graduated scale, in which the places and degrees would vary with the latitude of the place and the accidental circumstances of climate and government. We may therefore fairly consider every article produced or modified by the labour of man, as an article of manufacture. The earth is a part of the great machinery which produces cotton, the loom is another part of the machinery which merely continues the operations of the preceding artist, by converting that which he reaped into cloth. In both, the powers of nature direct and concur with human exertion, in increasing the quantity of enjoyment which the

substances in our possession are capable of affording.

"Enjoyment, or immunity from evil, which may almost without a misnomer be considered as enjoyment, is the only object of human desire, and consequently of human labour. The wealth of a nation may be defined *the power of a nation to procure enjoyment*, which may be understood as comprehending security, and therefore all the means of averting evil, and preserving good. To our power of procuring enjoyment, the manufacturer must surely be allowed to add, as his labour presupposes a want to be gratified. According to this definition of wealth, therefore, the economists *err*, and what other definition can justly be given?

"If wealth be considered in relation to others, only in the indirect power of procuring enjoyment, by barter of articles unnecessary, or less desirable to the exchanger, the wealth of a nation must be allowed in like manner to be increased by manufacture as by agriculture. If other circumstances of honour and facility be the same, the employment of an equal quantity of time and capital must, from the certain principle of competition, produce, on an average estimate, an equal increase of value. The capital, which before the labour could in both procure only 1000 hds. of rum in exchange, in both after the labour will procure a greater quantity. By the processes of both

therefore, the wealth of the nation has been increased, and the economists thus err, whether we consider the power of enjoyment, which constitutes the wealth of a nation, as directly or indirectly employed or procured.

"It is absurd to say that in the one case the labourer replaces his consumption and *adds more*, while in the other case the labourer only replaces what he has consumed. This is indeed true of the grain which the husbandman consumes; but why are we to consider only one part of his consumption? Is it true of the coat he has worn, of the plough he has purchased, of the house he has repaired? These no processes of his trade can *grow*. But he, in one sense, replaces them all, because he *grows* that which may be bartered to procure them. The workman of the loom or the forge, however, does the same. Each replaces in value the grain he has consumed, and all his articles of expense together, perhaps with a certain surplus. But the one does not necessarily, from the mere species of his labour, replace his consumption with a greater surplus than the other, and consequently not with a greater increase of national wealth.

"The ultimate incidence of taxation of land, being founded on an opinion manifestly erroneous, is not itself more admissible. Every tax indeed falls on land; but it falls on land only in part, for it falls as completely on every article of manufacture

in general use. Its effect is to increase price, and that is its only direct effect. It is the same as if the labourer or the capitalist had consumed more of the article before it was taxed, so as to equal the value of the whole he now consumes. But still, as in both cases the consumption is replaced in value with profit, so, if the demand for the taxed article be not diminished, is the value of this greater *consumption of price* replaced in both."——

"In the eastern and northern tongues the moon is masculine, the sun feminine, though the physical analogies are evidently opposite. May not this have arisen in those periods of predatory incursion, when among barbarous tribes 'The day is all their night, the night their day?' The soft light of the moon would thus be associated with ideas of warlike enterprise, and the placid orb itself be considered in some measure as the comrade of their toils."——

"By a scholar, who is not afraid of corrupting his taste, and who is desirous of an intimate knowledge with the minuter beauties of any language he studies, the quainter writers should be preferred; as by the frequent contrasts of antithesis, the precise meaning and force of the words in opposition are better understood, than by the more vague and general meaning which the words may express when standing singly. He who studies Cicero will be the better rhetori-

cian; he who studies Seneca will be the better philologer." *——

For some years after his appointment to the Moral Philosophy chair Dr. Brown had little leisure for engaging in any literary undertaking. Even the long summer vacation he found to be no more than sufficient for recruiting his health and spirits, and preparing him for the exertions of the succeeding season. By degrees, however, he became familiarised with the duties of his situation, and was enabled to indulge occasionally in other pursuits. In the summer of 1814 he brought to a conclusion his *Paradise of Coquettes*, upon which the fame that he at present enjoys as a poet seems chiefly to rest. He had begun this poem, and written a great part of it more than six years before, but was obliged to lay it aside on account of his health. In general, indeed, writing had the effect of raising his pulse very much, and rendered it so irritable as to make a difference of thirty in sitting or standing. When the work to which I at present allude was ready for the press, he was induced, from various circumstances, to resolve upon publishing it without his name. Every thing, accordingly, was gone about with the

* I intended to introduce some extracts from my Common Place Book, respecting his opinions upon various literary and philosophical subjects, but the quotations I have made from his own MSS. have occupied more space than I had anticipated, and I am unwilling to swell the chapter to a disproportioned length.

greatest secrecy. A gentleman, in whom he reposed great confidence, transacted with an eminent publisher, from whom the name of the author for a time was very carefully concealed, and the poem was published anonymously in London in 1814.

While the work was going through the press Dr. Brown continued in Scotland, but immediately upon its publication the natural curiosity of an author led him to the spot where it was most likely to be the subject of conversation. At this time the great events of the preceding part of the year had brought many of the continental potentates to London, and Dr. Brown was fortunate enough, on more occasions than one, to meet with some of the greatest of them. The following letter will be read with some interest as alluding to this circumstance.

FROM DR. BROWN.

Frith Street, Soho,
June 19, 1814.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

THE letter which you had the goodness to write to Samuel * was very gratifying to us both, as a pledge or symbol of your good health. I trust that good health is still continuing, and that though you may be a little *duller* than when a certain person was at No. 79, this is the only evil which you are to suffer till his return.

* Major Brown, Dr. Brown's brother.

That certain person, I can assure you, is much duller than when he was in Prince's Street. 'Dark with excess of light,' you know, is one of Milton's phrases, and it is perfectly true that one may be very very dull from the mere excess of what is commonly termed gaiety. I have positively not had the comfort of dining at home for more than a fortnight past, and have engagements for a week to come. O Moral Philosophy! you will say, is this seemly for a grave Professor of Ethics! Do not be in alarm for my virtue I beg. Think of the pious company I keep. Yesterday I dined with Mr. Wilberforce, and what is more, remained there and heard him pray in the midst of his family, so that if I am not in a fair way of being saintly, I don't know who is. The night before, I must confess, I was not employed in quite so serious a manner; I was at a very full and splendid rout of Lady Grey, in Portman Square, and was close to the Emperor for more than twenty minutes, in the midst of all the great foreigners, and the greatest of our own great. Among the rest the Prince of Orange was there, as was the Duke of Gloucester. The house is one of the handsomest in London, with a magnificent double staircase, and, large as the rooms are, they were perfectly crowded. I spent a very pleasant morning the other day at Mrs. ——. She sung to us after breakfast all her best songs, and she really sings with most powerful expression.

She is a great friend of the ————, and they praise her as in every respect most amiable, which I dare say she is—a little coquetry excepted—if that *is* to be excepted, in speaking of the virtues of a fair lady. I am to meet with her again at dinner, at Sir James Mackintosh's, on Wednesday. Lord Erskine dined where I was last Saturday, and read us a number of letters all relative to the Emperor Alexander; one, which the Emperor himself brought with him from his old tutor, introducing him to Lord E. as one *gentleman* carries to another *gentleman* such titles of introduction;—another, still more interesting, which the Emperor had written to his tutor, immediately on his accession, telling him how painful he felt the thought of the amount of happiness or misery that might depend on the uncertain resolutions of an inexperienced young man, and begging him, therefore, if he should ever hear of his having done any thing wrong, not to wait till he sent for him, (because if he had done any thing *very* wrong he probably might not send for him,) but to come immediately of himself to Petersburg, and to tell him how unworthy of his situation his conduct had been. I hope, before this letter reaches you, to hear from some one or other of the family; if not, write, I beg, by the very first post. I think of leaving London on Thursday se'ennight, but before that time I *must* have at least two letters from Edinburgh. Bath and Oxford are attract-

ing us very strongly towards them, and yet I am not sure but that I may resist their force, and proceed directly towards Scotland.

My brother would have written in this inclosure, but as I had preceded him, he thinks it better to wait a few days, and give you a little more of our London history. With kindest love to all,

Your affectionate Son,
THOMAS BROWN.

The following letter to his sister was written a few days afterwards.

FROM DR. BROWN.

MY DEAR JESS,—I had great pleasure in receiving your letter, and look while I am here for many repetitions of it. I have written at great length to my mother, and shall address you therefore only on the *Paradise*, which is doing, as far as I can learn, very well. I have been twice or thrice at Murray's, but it was too delicate a subject for me to allude to. Yet as I began to feel a little impatient, I begged ——— to lay aside a little of his shyness and go to Murray's to make inquiry. He called here yesterday to tell me of his success. Murray did not enter into particulars, but told him in general, that the prospect was highly flattering; that he had not heard a single person

speak of it but in terms of great commendation for its richness of fancy, melody of versification, and (which ——— was particularly glad to hear) for its condensation of so much thought in the compass of a single line. I must leave it therefore to make its way; but it is really quite teazing to be in the very place where it is sold, without being able to put, from time to time, the questions that almost start of themselves to the very tip of the tongue. The only drawback the other way is with respect to the chance of the authorship being known * * *. I own, however, I have fears myself; and I think it not unlikely that the knowledge of it is at the bottom of the coldness of certain friends of mine. I have written as fast as I could; but the bellman is waiting for my letter. Kind love to Ellen; and tell her that I will write to her in the order of seniority.

Your ever affectionate

T. B.

After Dr. Brown returned to Scotland he received from the publisher, to whom he was still unknown, sufficient information in regard to the degree of success he was to expect. All that is contained in the following extract has been so fully confirmed by the judgment of the public, that I may be excused for introducing it.

* * * * *

"I do assure you I feel not only satisfied, but proud of your volume. It will certainly sell at some time, and I am content to wait; but I do not anticipate a rapid sale, because its poem has one, and I sincerely believe but one, radical defect—a want of story, or of interest sufficient to supply the want of. You may rely upon the truth of what I tell you, that it never will sell beyond a second edition from this single want. I never desire to publish more exquisite versification; and I do assure you, upon my reputation, that with such writing, if the poem had possessed interest, I could have sold 10,000 copies. In every other desideratum it can *not* be better; but I have opportunities of reference to persons of the most unquestionable taste; and I have here given you the unanimous sentiment. I do entreat you to think upon a more happy subject, and your success will be certain.

"I beg you to accept my compliments, and the assurance that I entertain for you the most unfeigned esteem."

Dr. Brown's fears in regard to the authorship being discovered, were in a great measure groundless. The internal evidence was indeed very strong; but unfortunately the popularity of his former poetical works was not sufficiently great to render the chance of detection by that means very

probable, and the very few to whom the secret was known, seem to have been sufficiently cautious. As the proof sheets were sent under cover from Lord Grey, there was at one time a very general impression in London, that it was the production of a noble author of great political eminence, much connected with that distinguished statesman. This perhaps may account for the reception that the poem met with in some of the Reviews.

Upon the whole, however, the manner in which it was received, must have been gratifying to Dr. Brown's feelings. The sentence of the Reviews, with the exception to which I have alluded, was decidedly favourable; and the opinion of those, whose opinion he valued more than all the fame that a Review can give, was more favourable still. It would be doing injustice to Mr. Stewart not to mention, that upon receiving the poem, he read it with great delight, and that his discerning taste immediately discovered the author.

Dr. Brown's next publication was also poetical. At an early period, he had written some verses to accompany the *Letters of Mary Wollstonecroft from Norway*, as sent to a female friend, who had expressed a desire of reading them. These verses are to be found in the first edition of his Poems. And at Logie, in the neighbourhood of Stirling, where, in the summer of 1815, he had gone for the recovery of his health, he employed himself in filling up the plan that he had origin-

ally sketched. Upon this enlarged scale, he selected the poem to give name to a volume, and in the winter of 1815 it was published under the title of *The Wanderer in Norway.* This poem is eminently *moral,* both in its design and tendency, though, upon its first appearance, a most unjust clamour was raised against it, as if the subject were unsuitable for a Professor of Moral Philosophy. If Dr. Brown had sought to defend the guilty errors, of which he so affectingly represents the dreadful consequences, or if he had painted the sufferings of an erring mind with the view of leading us, in the tenderness of our sympathy, to forget that it had erred, he would indeed have shown himself unfit for his situation. But his object was far different. It was to show, that even in this mortal life, there is always a connexion between vice and suffering as its probable consequence; and to image and imbody to our immediate view a memorable example of the infirmities which one great moral error may develope in the character, "and of the many miseries, in the endless unforeseen perplexities of distress, that follow the first great misery of having yielded to a guilty passion."* The reverence that is due to that institution, which the unhappy subject of his poem, so fatally for her own happiness, allowed herself to despise, has

* Preface to the Wanderer in Norway, p. 10.

never been more eloquently illustrated, than in the following passage.

"Independently of the holiness which it gives to a connexion in itself delightful, and of its wide relations to the virtues of those who rise beneath its influence, with affections strong because unbroken, to be themselves the parents of a future race, there is something in the permanence of the bond itself, which woman especially should view with reverence, and should tremble to shake; because it is it, which, in the civilized world, has given her her best and only permanent authority..... It *might* happen sometimes, perhaps frequently,—that the heart, which she had long delighted, would, even though absolutely free, still continue to feel the many tender remembrances, and the warmth of grateful esteem, which, in marriage itself, often give to the most advanced years of union a delight perhaps as pure, as in the raptures of the original passion from which they have flowed. But there would be, in all cases, the dreadful probability, that, while the original passion faded, in a heart which was free to yield itself to the charm of every new desire, these feelings *might not* arise, or *might not* be of sufficient force to overcome the powerful seductions and attractions which would be everywhere around; and she, who felt the force of the consequences, involved in a contingence so probable and so momentous, would be a slave already, or

would be so naturally led to use the arts of a slave, that, with all the misery of servility, she could scarcely fail to acquire some or all of its corrupting habits. She is free, and has the noble spirit of the free, only in the security, which the lasting sanctity of reciprocal engagements gives. She has then a home, which is truly hers, and over which she can spread enjoyment, by a power that is truly of right divine. Without wedlock, she might be the mother of children; but, with wedlock, she is the mother of a family,—the consecrated possessor of an empire, of far more value, in the eyes of her who knows best how to enjoy it, than the empires, which convey crowns and sceptres and prostrations, but not the smiles of unceremonious and unfeigned love, and the gentle tones of kindness of the equal and the happy." *

The poetical merits of the piece consist principally in its containing what he intended it should contain, a picture of an impassioned mind, in circumstances of strong and wild emotion, and of "the country which bears in the rapid variety of its rude and magnificent scenery many analogies to the impetuous but changeful feelings, that may be supposed to have agitated such a mind in the dreadful circumstances in which it was placed."

* Preface, pp. 27—33.

There are in the poem many beautiful descriptions of external nature, and many passages of exquisite pathos. Its most characteristic features, however, are its nice analyses of feeling, and detection of the secret springs of conduct, in combination with the imagery and fervour of poetry. With what metaphysical accuracy, and with what poetical beauty does he describe those sophistries of the heart by which the victims of guilty passion reconcile their minds to infirmities and basenesses, which to themselves, in other circumstances, could not but appear as most contemptible. And with what a combination of poetical colouring, and philosophic analysis. does he impress upon the mind the essential importance of those high principles of conduct "which no mind, however ardent in its general admiration of virtue, can abandon with impunity, and without the strength of which no powers are strong."

The great defect of the poem is, not the predominance of the philosophic over the poetic spirit, with this I do not think it chargeable, but that it takes for granted too intimate an acquaintance, on the part of the reader, with the circumstances to which it refers, and that the merits of the different parts depend more upon their perceived relations to the other parts, than it is wise for a poet who considers the indolent temper in

which poetry is generally read to allow them to depend.

After the publication of *The Wanderer*, he received the following letter from one of the most eminent critics of the age.

December 25, 1815.

" My Dear Brown,—I am very much obliged to you for the pretty little volume you have been kind enough to send me, which I have just read through with very great delight. I am not sure that I should always agree with you in your notions of poetical excellence; but there is scarcely any one with whom I agree so much in my idea of the kind of sentiments and impressions which poetry should be employed to produce, and which should produce the best poetry. There is a genuine enthusiasm and tenderness of feeling in these pieces, which begets not only a love of the author, but a kinder feeling towards human nature, and lulls the mind into that blessed mood in which all worldly vanities and pretensions appear poor and despicable, and that of the critic and the writer, for mere distinction, lower than most of the rest. I owe you my sincere thanks for this enjoyment, which the bustle in which I live permits me but seldom to taste, and which I both envy and admire in you for having secured by a life more rational and heroic.

"Do not believe, however, that we poor drudges in the beaten ways of the world are altogether unworthy of your regard, or that we have not occasional aspirations after a better sort of existence. I wish you would come among us a little more, for the sake of past and of future times."

* * * * *

After the rising of his class in April, Dr. Brown usually continued two or three months in Edinburgh, when he retired with his sisters to some rural retreat, in the choice of which he was chiefly influenced by the opportunities it afforded him of indulging undisturbed in his admiration of external nature. He had all his life a great love of wandering among intricate paths, climbing high hills, and proceeding to the very brink of precipices, a taste which he not unfrequently indulged to his imminent danger.

> From rock to rock,
> When other steps paus'd shuddering at the chasm
> And the scant footing of the onward cliff,
> His leap was first. It was a joy, to tread
> The airy height, and gaze on all below,
> And feel no hazard but in the firm heart
> That dar'd to master it. Each rugged path
> He knew, and steep recess, whose shadows nurs'd
> The mountain flower.

From the usual sports of the field he shrunk with insuperable aversion; and these were the simple delights in which it was his happiness,

with an almost boyish joyousness of spirit, day after day to indulge.

Walking was his favourite exercise, which he preferred to every other, as he was thus able to pause and admire a rock, a wild flower, a brook, or whatever else of beautiful presented itself. This circumstance made him feel the presence of a stranger to be a restraint. His sisters were his chief companions. A small rivulet, and the smoke rising from a cottage sheltered among trees, were the natural objects that he seemed to contemplate with most delight. He never could pass either without pausing first to admire. Many allusions to this are to be found in his poetry.

He spent a considerable part of two summers at Invar, in the immediate neighbourhood of Dunkeld, and the happiness he enjoyed there, and his plans connected with it, entered so largely into his thoughts, that the account of his life would be defective, if I had passed over this circumstance. His first visit to Invar was in a great measure accidental, as appears from the following letter.

To Mrs. Brown.

Invar, near Dunkeld,
August, 1816.

My Dear Mother,

Here we are, fixed I think for several weeks, if all go on well in Prince's Street, and anxious

to see Ellen here as soon as possible. The house at which we live is a *quiet* inn, opposite Dunkeld, between the Bran and the Tay, and all the neighbouring country as beautiful as it is possible to imagine. This is beginning at the very end of our journey, however, instead of taking it chronologically and geographically. To go back then to Prince's Street, we had a very pleasant ride to the Ferry, and crossed the water without rain, which at this season was very fortunate for sailors in an open boat. From Inverkeithing to Perth there were a few showers, but as the country all the way, or at least the greater part of it, is extremely uninteresting, we did not lose much by the occasional obscurity of the sky. Near Perth we were pleased with the look of the crops, which were in good condition, and certainly riper than about Edinburgh. We arrived at three, and found the inn so crowded by the circuit, that it was impossible to get a separate room, so that we had to take our dinner in the traveller's room. In the evening we went to the ———, and drank tea with them; very much pleased with the lord of the house, who seems a most excellent husband and father, and much superior in all respects to what I had conceived him to be. We intended the next day to call on Mr. ———, who lives on the opposite side of the Tay, but were tempted by two of our travelling companions, one of them a pupil of mine last year, to take a chaise to Dun-

keld the next morning and visit the Ducal grounds. I thought it possible that we might get some lodging house in the neighbourhood, and took my packages accordingly. We had a very wet day, and certainly did not see the grounds to advantage; but to *us* who are living in the heart of them, that was no great matter.

* * * * * * * *

The following letter was written after he had spent some weeks at Invar.

Invar, near Dunkeld,
Sept. 30, 1816.

"My Dear ———, Your last unanswered letter—shame upon me that I should have *so* to number them,—found me in this place, where I have been staying for more than a fortnight past, enjoying the great beauty of the scenery, with the perfect happiness of an idle man. Your book, however, I received, some weeks before I left town, and had time to read it with the attention it deserves. The approbation it deserves followed of course. I really *do* look upon it, independently of all considerations of friendship, as a most valuable accession to the *practical* works on our science, and, as much as the subject at present allows, to our *theoretical* works.

"I do love the ——— much, and we all feel very grateful to you for introducing them to us.

Caroline's eyes are not merely as black and as bright as you described them, but are capable of saying more brilliant things than even bright and black eyes are usually capable of uttering in the twinkling of a glance. I really believe her own eloquent voice is scarcely so witty and oratorical in a quarter of an *hour*, as they are in their passage from gay to grave in a quarter of a *minute*. I tried her by all my tests, sometimes by being sage, and sometimes by being ignorant, and, with all my art, I could not take her in to say a foolish thing, or be guilty of any pretension. Her sister does not wear stockings with quite so deep a tinge of celestial blue, but she has a blue about her soul, that is very delightful, a serenity of kindness, and a practical good sense, that seem to tell her what is generous, and wise, and good, and beautiful, better than half the folios in the largest library. Her brother is—a good brother, and I have no doubt partakes largely of the general kindness of the family. I have left no room for Mrs. ——, and *all* her kind relatives, about whom I long much to hear. O for another sound of the harp in —— Street, from the fingers of the same harper. Jess and Ellen, who are with me, unite in best regards to Mrs. —— and you."

Of the beauties of Dunkeld he always talked with rapturous admiration. The thought of being there always seemed to inspire him with hap-

piness. "After spending some weeks," says he, in a letter which I received from him the following season, "very pleasantly on the banks of the Clyde, I set off to-morrow with my sisters, to spend a few weeks I hope still more pleasantly on the banks of the Tay, at my dear old *habitat* of Invar. I trust you have been enjoying our singularly fine season, half idly half busily, which would be just half as busy again as *my* rustication has hitherto been. You have been a wanderer I know. * * * * * "We are all well—very great walkers, and not very great thinkers, beyond the last walk and the walk of to-morrow, with a few parenthetic meditations on the three or four meals of the day, *strenuos nos exercet inertia.*"

It was at Invar, in the autumn of 1816, that he wrote the *Bower of Spring*. Before he left Edinburgh, there had been a great deal of speculation among some of the philosophers in regard to a change that was supposed to have taken place in the seasons; and many ingenious theories had been proposed, as has often been the case with regard to ingenious theories, to account for a phenomenon that had no existence to be accounted for. Among these theories, Dr. Brown, having found none that appeared to him to be satisfactory, was led to direct his own powers to a solution of the difficulty. With what success we learn from his Preface.

" *The Bower of Spring*, though in verse, is destined to unfold one of the most profound discoveries that have been made in the Philosophy of Nature.

" How backward are our summers now, compared with those of the good old times before us! —How much longer in duration are our fashionable winters!—It seems strange that these two propositions should have been repeated over and over again by the same lips, innumerable times; and yet that nobody should have thought of putting them together, in their proper order, as cause and effect. The beautiful link, which binds them thus powerfully in mutual relation, had not then, however, been discovered. But it is now discovered; and with the pride of the sage of Syracuse, I may exclaim, ' I have found it.'

" An apple falls to the ground:—The planets do not fly away from the sun.—When one of the very few sages, worthy of being named with the Syracusan, had put these two propositions together, he could have no peace of mind, till he had written a quarto volume, to tell the world the mighty secret, that he had done so. My secret is not less important; and I am content with teaching it in a few dozen of verses."*

He was certainly disappointed in the reception of this poem. It was published in Edinburgh as by the author of the Paradise of Coquettes,

* Preface to the Bower of Spring, pp. 3—5.

and from this and some other circumstances, the name of the author began to be suspected. He at one time hesitated about bringing it out in Edinburgh; and I cannot help thinking, that if it had been published in London, it would have had a much more extensive circulation. In that case, the author for a time would have continued unknown, and as the poem exhibits all the characteristic excellencies of the Paradise, and is free from many of its disadvantages, it would have enjoyed at least an equal popularity. The volume, besides the poem which gives it its name, contains several smaller pieces of very great beauty.*

In the year 1817, Dr. Brown lost his mother, whom he loved with the utmost reverence and tenderness of affection. The care and kindness with which he watched over her in her last illness, cannot be described, and his affliction upon her death was deep and lasting. Her remains were at first placed in a vault in Edinburgh, and at the expiration of the winter session, removed to the family

* It is remarkable that the thought in the Bower of Spring is hinted at in one of the smaller poems of Dryden, beginning—"*Ask'st thou the cause why sullen spring.*"—Whether Dr. Brown was aware of the existence of this poem I know not. Nor is it of importance to his fame; as the statement of Dryden is merely in a single instance, it interferes with the originality of Dr. Brown no more than the *anticipations* of the Newtonian theory diminish his well-earned fame of *generalising* the facts that had formerly been observed.

burying-ground in the old church-yard of Kirkmabreck. This romantic and secluded spot, Dr. Brown had always viewed with great interest. A few years before, in visiting his father's grave, he had been altogether overcome, and when he saw the earth closing in upon all that remained on earth of a mother that was so dear to him, *and the long grassy mantle cover all,* his distress was such as to affect every person who saw him.

At this time he paid a visit at the Manse of Kirkmabreck, where he experienced the attention of Mr. Sibbald, the present incumbent, who pointed out to him the many beauties of that singularly beautiful situation, and led him to some of the favourite spots where his father had been wont to retire from the world and indulge in solitary meditation. Without the aid of such associations, the scene could not fail to awaken the admiration of any one who is not utterly dead to the beauties of external nature. Dr. Brown viewed it with an enthusiasm of delight, and used to say, that "he might rejoice in having been born in the most beautiful parish in Scotland." To those who may not have visited this part of the island, it may not be uninteresting to know, that, in the neighbourhood of the clergyman's house, is to be found the original of some of the most striking and graphic descriptions in *Guy Mannering.* In

different parts of Dr. Brown's poetry, the beauties that cradled his infancy are alluded to.

> My earliest breath
> Rose heavenward in a wilderness of sweets;
> So fair as might have cradled the young heart
> Of one whom she, whose temple is the world,
> Was nursing for her altar. My first gaze,
> Beyond the mansion of my simple home,
> Was on the breadth of ocean, and the hills
> That circled me.

After he left Kirkmabreck, Dr. Brown spent a few months at the Manse of Balmaclellan, with his brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Thomson.

While residing there, a woman who had been born deaf was brought before the Court of Justiciary at Edinburgh, accused of child-murder. The case was obviously a difficult one; and one of the depute-advocates applied to Dr. Brown for his opinion upon the subject. He stated his views very fully in the following letter, which is in every respect worthy of its author.

To Mr. Maconochie.

Balmaclellan, New Galloway,
July 14th, 1817.

My Dear Maconochie,

I have been so *wide* a wanderer of late, that it was only on my arrival here last night I re-

ceived your letter, which had been forwarded to me from Gatehouse. In answering it at present, therefore, I write with less meditation than so interesting a subject deserves. The case indeed is one that would have been worthy of all the talents and profound knowledge of your excellent father, whom new circumstances will often be giving us new occasions to regret, and whom we shall always regret most in circumstances of greatest difficulty.

In the present case, there seem to be *many* questions.

In the first place, is the pannel capable of knowing the moral differences of actions as right or wrong? On this point I have no doubt whatever, at least with regard to a crime like that which is the subject of the present prosecution. If there *be* any *original* moral power of discrimination like that which has been improperly called *the moral sense*, it is quite clear that deafness does not preclude that which is as much a part of the constitution as the sense of sound itself: and if we suppose the moral feelings to be the *result* of various observations and sympathies, and tender remembrances, there is surely no reason for asserting, that an adult strong-minded *deaf* person is incapable of *forming the associations* which are supposed to give birth to the moral regard. The *sense* of *sound* is surely not more important *in itself* than the *sense* of *sight*; and though, *as the medium of language*, it can-

not fail to convey much instruction as to the *consequences* of actions, it still *presupposes* a tendency to feel approbation of actions that are beneficial to others, and disapprobation of actions, of which the only object is injury; without which previous tendency to feel the emotion, the nice analysis of the consequences of the actions would be of no value. I am far from thinking that the pannel has such refined feelings of this sort as those possess who have the advantage of letters. *Her* feelings must be rarely called forth, because they are called forth only by events that really take place or have taken place before her very eyes; while literature is continually surrounding us with real or imaginary *doers* and *sufferers* whom we have never seen. But that *murder* is worthy of disapprobation, or in other words is *wrong*, she knows probably as well as the greater number of those human brutes who are condemned for the perpetration of it. Indeed I have little doubt that *her* feelings of moral abhorrence of such a crime are *more* vivid than those of many young ruffians, the children of older ruffians, who have been fostered in vice, and who have had the sense of language only to hear curses and blasphemies, and the mockery of every thing pure and kind. You do not allow this bad education to be pleaded in bar of a criminal prosecution, and as little, on *this* ground, should deafness be admitted.

"All this reasoning is *a priori* as it were,—but in Kinniburgh's evidence, you have I think sufficient proof of an indignant repelling of the charge of murder, which might of itself be considered as implying her *capacity of moral feeling*.

In the next place, is she capable of knowing that when she did wrong she exposed herself to punishment?

That a deaf person is *capable* of knowing this I think cannot be doubted, if his observations have been wide, and if he be capable of knowing right from wrong. *He*, like other people, may see some one do what is wrong, and may afterwards see the same person caught in the fact, seized by force, beaten by the individual whose property or person he was injuring, or carried away to prison in spite of his struggles;—what has *preceded*—what has *followed*,—a deaf person is equally capable of combining in his mind as other people; but he knows *fewer* antecedents and consequents, because all which he knows must have been observed by himself. He does not know, therefore, with so much precision that *crimes* are followed by punishment, because he can know this only of the particular crimes which he has had personal opportunities of observing to be so followed; and if he never *saw* any punishment follow, he probably never would conceive it to be a physical consequence, more than he would have conceived *a priori* that a charged electric battery would

give him a shock: an adult however can scarcely fail to have made such observations; and accordingly, it appears in evidence that the pannel, in this case, has a notion that her detention in prison arises from the supposition of her having murdered her child.

In the next place, is it necessary that, in order to render the pannel a fit subject for trial, she should be supposed capable of knowing the *law* that has been violated?

By fiction in this country, every body is *supposed* to know the existing laws, to which he has virtually consented. This fiction, which is evidently *untrue* in innumerable cases, where nobody conceives the criminal to have known the particular penalties to which he was exposing himself, is *physically impossible* in the present case, and this physical impossibility may perhaps be a technical bar. But of *that* I am not *lawyer* enough to judge. As a *moralist* I should be inclined to say that it is no bar. It is sufficient if the pannel have known that she was doing that which was *morally wrong*,—and if the punishment awarded be in proportion to the offence.

In the next place, is the pannel capable of *pleading* Guilty, or Not Guilty?

That there are cases in which it is possible, by signs, to convey a distinct negative or admission of a particular action charged, is shown, I

think, sufficiently by the present case, in which the pannel appears clearly to deny the fact alleged. But I am far from thinking that this could be done in all cases, in which a criminal prosecution might be instituted; and it would be a point therefore necessary to be determined in each particular case.

If, *in the present case*, all which is meant by *pleading* Guilty or Not Guilty, be the confession or denial of the *fact* charged, with a belief that freedom, or punishment of *some sort*, will be the consequence,—*so far* I think the pannel may be said to be capable of pleading. But if it imply a *perfect knowledge* of the consequences of the pleading, I do not think that, in this, which I take to be the real legal sense of the phrase, she *can* be said to be *capable* of pleading: and if that step be *technically* necessary, therefore, I conceive that there is a sufficient bar to the trial in this very circumstance.

But, omitting this technical objection, I do not see how it is possible that the trial should be suffered to proceed, for reasons of much more importance. The pannel may be made to know that she is charged with the commission of a particular crime; but this is all which can be made known to her. She cannot be made to know what witnesses are to appear against her; she cannot cross-question, nor instruct her counsel how to examine them,—she cannot even know

what evidence is given against her. Now, without this power on her part, there is evidently no fair trial. Why is it that a list of witnesses is given to the accused, but that he may be enabled to bring such counter-evidence as may prove their evidence unworthy of credit, if truly unworthy? and why is the evidence taken in the presence of the pannel, but that he, or his counsel instructed by him, may put such questions as appear to them fit to disprove the charge in support of which the evidence is adduced? A trial without notice given to the prisoner, of all the circumstances of the charge itself, without any list of witnesses to be adduced, and without his presence during the examination of the witnesses, could not surely, on the humane principles of our law, be regarded as a trial, and yet this is what the present trial, if persisted in, would *virtually* be.

I could have said much more, but the post hour is come, and in my hurry I have scarcely time to add that I am ever, &c. &c.

THOMAS BROWN.

Pray send me a copy of the Memorials, when they are prepared, addressed to Balmaclellan, New Galloway. T. B.

It was during his residence at Balmaclellan that Dr. Brown wrote his *Agnes*. He mentioned

that his chief object in publishing this poem was that he might have an opportunity of introducing the verses to the memory of his mother. It is worthy of remark, that Pope, whom Dr. Brown, as a poet, most resembles, was distinguished for his filial virtues; and the lines upon his mother, in the epistle to Arbuthnot, must be in the recollection of every one who conceives that there is no poetry more beautiful than that which expresses most faithfully virtuous sentiment. At the same time, the lines of Pope are rather expressive of his own sentiments than descriptive of the qualities that excited them; and even that expression, though in the highest degree beautiful, is brief and general. In the verses by Dr. Brown I know not whether most to admire, the respectful tenderness of his own affection, or the faithful delineation of the character of his mother. The whole poem ought to be carefully read by those who would thoroughly appreciate the happy conformation of his mind in all the gentler sentiments. I can insert only a very few lines.

> But age has still, all gentle and benign,
> Another form,—and O! that form was thine;—
> The smile, which youth, when gayer eyes are round,
> Oft turns to seek,—more happy, when 'tis found;
> The glance, that bids but wrath or sorrow cease;
> The peaceful voice, which but to hear is peace;
> The temper, milder, as the years that part
> Loose many a ruffling care which gall'd the heart;
> And all the soul, to holiest wishes given,
> More pure, more heavenly, as still nearer Heaven.

Agnes was published in the beginning of the winter of 1818. Its circulation does not appear to have been more extensive than that of his former poems, a circumstance for which it may appear difficult to account; as the poem is free from those obscurities that had been supposed to diminish the interest in his former pieces, and has the recommendation of an affecting and simple story. At the same time, I confess that I anticipated that its success would not be equal to its deserts. When an impression unfavourable to a poet has once gone abroad, it is not a single work, which in other circumstances might have met with a favourable reception, that will change it. I was therefore very urgent with Dr. Brown, to bring out this poem anonymously in London; but to this he would not consent. I am not without hopes, however, that the poem may yet become a favourite with the public. It contains innumerable beauties both of sentiment and of expression. The death of Edward appears to me to be one of the most pathetic passages to be found in poetry. As I should be willing to leave the question, whether Dr. Brown was a poet, to depend upon this single passage, I shall insert it almost at full length. Before proceeding to transcribe the passage, I may observe, that in reading some parts of it, Dr. Brown said, "It is not unlikely that I may one day feel what I describe." From the tendency he

had to cough on the slightest cold, he was led to this anticipation of suffering. I may also observe, that in the character of Edward throughout, whether intentionally or not I shall not take it upon me to determine, a true picture is to be found of Dr. Brown's own character.—The beauty of the extract will be perceived without particularly mentioning the melancholy circumstances, that threw a shade over the hopes of a gentle spirit, who had gone forth to the field of combat, and after signalizing his valour by deathless exploits, was returning to the house of his guardian and his mistress to die.

Round ALBERT's dwelling fair the Summer shone
In bloomy pomp rejoicing. Not a turf
Was flowerless; and on every slope, that caught
The full bright day, a glow of thousand hues
Half hid the vesture of the simpler year,
When all was one calm green. The very shade,
Where the dim eye scarce wander'd, to the ear
Was glad, and from the darkling grove, or gloom
Of deeper wood, sent warblings forth of joy.
But tho' around was Nature smiling gay,
Dead were all smiles within: The third sad week
Was o'er, since first, of him who fell, and him
Who languish'd on a distant couch, had come
Dark tidings:—and with melancholy watch,
Herself the busiest there, had AGNES seen
A lov'd long-vacant chamber deck'd anew,
As gentle fancy prompted, with kind aid
Of all which pain could need; ere morrow's close,
Expectant of the hour that was to light
The slow-returning sufferer to his home.

Such office past, from noontide walk she came,
Companion of her sire, and ere she reach'd
The flowery path that border'd on the lawn,
Heard, that already, with unpromis'd speed,
The wanderer had arriv'd.———

O! paler, fainter, than even fear
Had imag'd in her saddest dream,—he stood
Before her.—All illusive trust was o'er.—
He was, what she beheld him;—and the quench
Of hope, and sudden contrast of despair,
Made even the ghastly change, she saw too true,
Seem ghastlier, deathlier, still. It was no joy,
To feel on hers the clasp of that lov'd hand,
The touch of that lov'd lip;—for in her soul,
Ere it could snatch the moment's fleet delight,
Was trembling, as if ne'er to meet again
A last salute of death. She would have check'd,
If power had been o'er tears, the streaming flood,
And smil'd a happier welcome, while with force
Of gentlest guidance to the couch again
She led him half-exhausted;—but no smile
Came at her will. "Nay," said he, "do not think
That mine is other faintness than they feel,
Who, from long absence, with too rash a haste,
Journey to friends most lov'd. To press afar
A bed of lonely sickness was indeed
To be a sufferer;—but so near to view
The looks which bade my early sorrows fly,
Is strength like those blest years. More swift I came,
Than warning friendship counsell'd; but I felt,
That every hour of absence was an hour
To health all lost. I shall not long require
Your care,—O! not so long, as to fatigue
That boundless tenderness.—'Tis but to breathe
A few sweet airs, which o'er these happy vales
Have hover'd till they caught the joy they saw,—
And I shall be again, in joyous strength,

What ye have known me." AGNES shrunk to feel,
As with a smile he ceas'd, the burning hand,
That, with anticipated fondness, seem'd
To speak its thanks, for soothings yet to come.
At each new opening of his lip, she fear'd
For frame so feeble; and, from hour to hour,
When frequent was his speech, of countries trod,
And gallant spirits known, and wonders heard
Or witness'd,—tho' she listen'd with a soul
All ardent,—gladly would her wish have hush'd
The very words which yet 'twas sweet to hear.

O! not more sleepless was the night to eyes
Which watch'd around his bed, than 'twas to him
Who on its pillow press'd a brain of fire.
The morning came; but plans, which eve had form'd,
Of early visits to lov'd haunts, the morn
Allow'd not:—in his languid frame too well
The shock was seen of rapid journeying past,
And of that conflict of the soul, when joy
And grief and sudden-bursting fondness swell
A heart long lonely, to kind looks restor'd,—
A heart, that fear'd to show what struggled there.
There was a flame in every pulse; and thrice,
Mix'd with his quick convulsive breath, had gush'd
Copious a sanguine stream. From that dread hour,
What terror grew in AGNES!—The dim eye,
The wasted cheek, the parch'd and burning lip,
May tell of deeper ill that preys within,
But with a voice so calm, that boding love,
Familiar to the change which steals along,
Scarce marks the progress. But the watchful ear
Hears but by fits; and each repeated sound
Still startles. Oft as in quick breathings heav'd
Again his struggling bosom, AGNES thought
Again she heard the choaking stream, again
Saw the red current flow,—each deepening peal
The very knell of misery, soon to be.

Day follow'd anxious day, whose only change
Was ill's increase, scarce cheer'd by the few words
Of solace, feebly breath'd by lips that knew
There was no presage in them. AGNES felt,
As every morn and eve returning brought
Another visit of that friendly skill,
What pang it is, to gaze on searching eyes,
And think, in every counted pulse, to read
Some prophecy of doom,—to watch the glance,
And listen to each question's soothing tone,
And feel strange hope,—then look again, and dread,
As if 'twere feign'd in comfort to despair,
The very smile that whisper'd hope before.
No terror was in EDWARD'S eye.—He saw,
He heard, he answer'd, as if all around
Were the calm care of hospitable love,
And every question but of some slight good,
That might be worth the keeping, but which lost
Were scarcely sorrow. AGNES did not dread
To meet his gentle cheerfulness of brow;
For 'twas not such as theirs, who, gay with plans
Of distant joy, unconscious of the stroke
Which hovers near, on the sad gazer smile
With mirth, that claims light answer, from a heart
Which throbs with agony. Its glow serene
Spoke but of present calm, nor ask'd a look
To whisper of the future,—such a smile,
As tho' the gay might deem it gay as theirs,
The sad might almost weep beside, nor fear
To break its peacefulness.———

Swift grew the wasteful progress now of Death,
That had for weeks, with slow insidious course,
Scarce startled where it mined. On restless days,
Came nights as restless;—or, of sleep e'er lull'd
The weary eye, 'twas sudden with such pangs
Of breathless agony convulsive rent,
That in short toss from feverish dream to dream
There was no freshening calm, but slumber's self

Seem'd a new weariness. The pallid cheek
Oft burn'd with rosy flush, like that, which warm,
At sunset, o'er the clouds of dying eve,
Speaks but of hastening night;—and the sunk eye,
That, darklier shaded, might to common glance
Have look'd all ruminant and inly lost,
Still beaming there in fondness, seem'd retir'd
From wider vision, only to preserve
Its last sweet light, for the lov'd soothers near.

Bright shone by fits the day,—by fits was flung
Thro' hurrying clouds. Awhile, in ALBERT'S arms
Supported, had the breathless sufferer sought
Short ease; and AGNES, in vain watch to slake
A pang which no kind beverage could allay,
Was bending o'er his pillow. Sudden burst
The sun from its dim mantle;—and the beam
Thro' the half-curtain'd window faintly glow'd
On EDWARD'S brow.—'Twas Autumn,—such a day,
As when he parted from that dearest roof
Which now again was o'er him; and the thoughts
Seem'd instant mingling in his soul, of all
Which then he felt, and of each fateful change
Since last that season shone; for in his eye,
Where all before was bright, there was a tear
He did not strive to hide;—quick from his cheek
The hectic faded;—and with sense all lost,
A deathlike weight, on ALBERT'S breast he fell.
But 'twas a moment's languor;—for the fire
Of life relum'd his eye;—again his cheek
Glow'd;—and in busy labour at his heart,
As if in search of something treasur'd there,
His hands were struggling.—To the aged brow,
That o'er him bent and wept, an upward look
He turn'd, and faintly cried, "Till death,—till death,—
Then,—then,—not longer,—not in after time,—
O! said I not, till death?" He clasp'd the hand
Of AGNES,—kiss'd it;—from his bosom drew
What, even in misery of her tears, her eye

Quick recogniz'd,—the tress, the little pledge
She deem'd with ARTHUR lost;—a moment gaz'd,
And snatch'd it to his lip;—then nearer drew
The hand that throbb'd in his,—kiss'd yet again
The relic,—press'd it fondly on her palm,
Which clos'd on it;—and, striving still to raise
Once more and half-way meet with bending lip
That gentle clasp,—sank o'er it, faint,—and died.

The frequency with which the poetical works of Dr. Brown succeeded each other began to excite remark.* And while the devotion of his mind to poetry, to the neglect, as was supposed, of philosophy, was objected to him by his enemies almost as a moral defect in his character, even those who were inclined to judge more favourably, regretted it as a weakness that materially injured his reputation. The objection was somewhat similar to that which Cicero tells us was made to him for the attention he paid to the Greek philosophy. *Non eram nescius, ut hic noster labor in varias reprehensiones incurreret, nam quibusdam, et iis quidem non admodum indoctis, totum hoc displicet, philosophari. quidam autem non id tam reprehendunt, si remissius agatur: sed tantum studium, tamque multam operam ponendam in*

* The *War-fiend* was published in 1816; *the Bower of Spring* in 1817; a second edition of the *Paradise of Coquettes* in 1817; *Agnes* in 1818; *Emily* in 1819. The second edition of *The Renovation of India*, though printed in 1819, was not published till after Dr. Brown's death. The circumstances connected with the publication of the first edition I have no wish to discuss.

eo non arbitrantur. . . . Postremo aliquos futuros suspicor, qui me ad alias litteras vocent: genus hoc scribendi, etsi sit elegans, personæ tamen, et dignitatis esse negent.

To these objections Dr. Brown's answer might be the same as Cicero's.

Si delectamur, cum scribimus: quis est tam invidus, qui ab eo nos abducat? sin laboramus: quis est, qui alienæ modum statuat industriæ?

That Dr. Brown preferred poetry to philosophy is certain. The rapidity with which he arrived at the knowledge of the questions that have been discussed among philosophers, made him feel it as an irksome task to dwell upon those intermediate steps* which were necessary for the satisfaction of other minds, though, to his quicker glance, the conclusion seemed intuitively obvious. How far he was justifiable in yielding to his own taste in the choice of his literary pursuits, it might require a casuist to decide. It must, however, be observed that he neglected none of

* When the third edition of his Cause and Effect was going through the press, in reading some of the most abstruse passages he would say, *Now this really seems to me more like the Multiplication Table than any thing else.* I may take this opportunity of mentioning, that he was particularly anxious to make his theory intelligible, and to remove the possibility of drawing from it any conclusion unfavourable to religion. In the course of his reading he often looked up and said, *Now, is this quite plain?* or, *There's surely nothing heretical here.*

the duties of his situation which his health would allow, and it does appear to me that to aim at refining the mind by habituating it to the contemplation of the fairest forms of beauty or virtue, may be as worthy as to determine wherein the essence of beauty or virtue consists. And the man who, by his writings, seeks to raise and refine the tone of the moral sentiments of his readers, deserves as well of mankind as if he had endeavoured to disclose to them principles that might have served to augment the wealth of the community.

That Dr. Brown did not consult for his immediate fame in the choice he made, may be readily allowed. But before he brought himself forward in the character of a poet, he was aware of the risk to which he subjected himself. And, having once resolved, he had too much firmness of character to be moved by the censure or neglect of his contemporaries.

CHAPTER VIII.

POETICAL WORKS.

THE early hold that poetry took of Dr. Brown's mind has been already stated, and the attention he paid to it through life, as well as the influence it had upon his fame, requires that his poetical productions should be treated of in a separate chapter. The first edition of his poems was published, as has been seen, in 1803. The dates of his other publications and various circumstances connected with them will be found in the preceding part of the volume. I intend to devote the present chapter to his poetical character in general.

Dr. Brown's poetical productions are of very various species of composition. There is scarcely any style of which examples are not to be found in his writings: descriptive, amatory, satyrical,

devotional, narrative, in almost every variety of measure of which the English language allows. In all this diversity, there is no species of poetry in which the character of his powers has not enabled him to rise to excellence. A quick and tender sympathy in all the kinder affections, an exquisite perception of the beauties of external nature, a rich imagination, and a highly cultivated taste, gave him a superiority in all that is beautiful and attractive; the exalted tone of his moral sentiments gave an enthusiasm of feeling to his higher productions; and the exuberance of a wit, now playful now satyrical, made him equally admirable in the lighter elegances and graces of a gayer species of poetry.

It was in this last kind of poetry in which he obviously most delighted, and in which his success has been greatest. His acquaintance with the tone of refined society, his delicate discrimination of the lighter shades of character, his dexterity in detecting the secret springs of conduct, and the sportful humour with which he satyrises the frivolities of fashionable life, have secured for his *Paradise of Coquettes*, a rank with which the ambition of any poet might be satisfied, and placed his name, in the playful species of epic, next to that of Pope.

In the high and abstract personification of general qualities, in lofty trains of moral reflection, in the enthusiasm of heroic and generous senti-

ments, with accordant trains of moral imagery, and clothed in the majestic and ample folds of the diction and versification of which Akenside first gave the example, *The Renovation of India*, and *The Glories of Poesy*, may certainly be ranked with the Pleasures of Imagination of that illustrious poet.

In his *Agnes*, and in many of his smaller poems, he has painted the milder affections, in every attitude, of gentle sorrow, of soft regard, of gay and confiding kindness and of overwhelming wretchedness, with a truth of tenderness, to which it would not be easy to find a parallel.

There is nothing more remarkable in Dr. Brown's poetry than the acquaintance he shows with the human heart. He had studied, with the accuracy of a philosopher, the nature and relations of all the affections of mind; he had extensively surveyed their multiplied and diversified workings in real life; and he had an imagination ingenious to picture ideal scenes, where the feelings are called forth in new attitudes and combinations. The effect of all this is to be seen in the variety, originality, and fidelity of his representations of character and manners.

He has succeeded better, perhaps, in analysing and painting the feelings, than in exhibiting them in action. And though he was well qualified both to conceive and to paint situation, it is not in this that the originality of his genius is shown,

so much as in the minute and affecting truth of his delineation of the feelings of his characters, under the circumstances in which he represents them. He does not seek to excite and gratify the curiosity by new or extraordinary incidents. The incidents are chosen not so much for their own sake as for their fitness to afford opportunities for interesting revelations of character and passion. And even in his representations of character, it is not by turning our eye, to a rapid series of daring actions or complicated sufferings, that he draws forth our sympathies; but by revealing to us the ethereal springs of conduct, and by unfolding the nice varieties and elements of suffering. In this respect he is altogether without a rival. The outward and obvious effects of the passions many have been more successful in representing; but none in painting the emotions themselves. He has succeeded in describing, with all the charms of poetic beauty, the most inward feelings of the heart; and I know of none, to whom the account of the bard, in the Castle of Indolence, is more applicable,—*Him through their inmost walks the Muses led.* The finest and minutest parts of the most delicate emotions are not merely visible, but actually rise from the canvass. And the power of his pencil is shown in representing them where they exist in the faintest hues, or where they melt into one another by almost imperceptible

gradations. The peculiar delicacy of his own feelings led him equally to delight and to excel in this department. His whole frame seems to have been of a more delicate conformation than that of other men, and by this finer mechanism of mind, he has been enabled to seize upon, and to give permanence to those emotions, which others have found too evanescent to fix, or too complicated to analyse, or too fleeting and shadowy to portray. In sorrow, in love, in devotion, there "are sighs where accents fail," there is a language of "the whispering eyes" that speaks only what "the heart can hear," and there are aspirations, into which the soul rises, whose very excess prevents us from giving them utterance, "and makes us marble by too much conceiving;" and it is in these exquisite conditions that he delights to represent the heart.

From the same cause, the features of external objects, upon which he dwells with most pleasure, are of a corresponding grace and delicacy. It is not the open and obvious aspects that he presents, but those minute traits that are scarcely perceptible to the hasty or inattentive gaze, that almost withdraw themselves from the eye; but which, on this very account, appear of more exquisite beauty when once perceived, and half whose loveliness, like that of the half shut violet, is in their concealment. He delights to trace the line that distinguishes amidst the many hues that, to

the superficial glance appear all indistinguishably blended into one loveliness, and to fix our eye upon those exquisite conditions where there is a *transition* from one charm to another. It is not merely the beauty that remains yet perceptible, or the still greater beauty into which it unfolds, but the more shadowy, though more affecting grace which is in the very transition. He is equally admirable in seizing that form of beauty which is just beginning to fade,—where "the lights decay, steal into shades and mildly melt away," and that from this fugaciousness itself derive so much additional loveliness. In this respect nothing can be more beautiful than the following lines.

In every fading grace there is a charm
Most tender in its fading.—The thin wreaths,
Which from the cottage chimney, through the boughs
That circle it, rise blue, then vanish, lost
While yet the eye would grasp them,—the bright rill,
That flits before us, and with tuneful voice
Of greeting, while it parts, to come no more,
Sings in each wave, "Farewell!"—the dewy gem,
Which sparkles in the morn's slant ray, and melts
Even in the glitter of the beam, that bathes
In brightness what it wastes,—the flower, which smiles
Beneath that lucid drop, its own sweet hues
As bright, and scarce less fugitive,—all fix
The soften'd eye more fondly in the thought,
That what is now so sweet may ne'er again
Be to our gaze the loveliness we view.*

In his representations of character, and in his

* Agnes, part iii.

descriptions of external nature, there is a striking peculiarity which may be ascribed partly to his intellectual habits, and partly to the character of his genius. By these, he was uniformly led to examine into the sources of all that interested him, to analyse all the feelings he experienced, and to trace them in the long series of their influence. In consequence of this, though he had an eye for all that is fair in external nature and interesting in human character, his representations of the interesting and the fair are rather in their elements and relations than in those aspects in which they are usually viewed. His mind dwells often upon the external qualities that are considered to be beautiful or lovely; but still more upon those associated circumstances which give them their greatest beauty or loveliness. In other poets we have usually a representation of such lineaments as are pleasing to the eye of all; and these are left to call up associated circumstances of emotion, in minds of analogous imagination. But Dr. Brown delights chiefly to paint the very feelings and associations that the outward and obvious lineaments suggest. In the account which he gives of the emotion of beauty in his *Lectures*, he endeavours to show that the quality seldom resides, or at least that but little of it resides in the material forms that are distinguished by the name, and that it is rather a floating veil of associated emotions that we identify with it. And in his representations of beautiful

objects, it is not the external qualities that he seeks to delineate, but the wavy and graceful folds of this veil of delight that floats in loveliness around them;—it is the associated feeling which in reality constitutes the beauty, and not the material quality with which our imaginations embody it, that he seeks to represent;—it is *the beauty* rather than *the beautiful* that he describes. The whole beauties and glories of man and nature were known to him; but it is the beauties and glories of man and nature, rather than man and nature in their beauty and glory, that he draws. He seldom seeks to give an object in itself an individual existence. It is by its effects, or in its striking attitudes, that he makes it known to us. His very images are not so much to the eye or the imagination as to the understanding or the affections. Other poets often succeed in making us feel through the eye, but Dr. Brown succeeds in making us see through the heart.

If it is supposed, however, from this representation, that there are not to be found pictures of those objects in those forms that every eye will recognise as beautiful, I have conveyed a false idea of Dr. Brown's poetry. His descriptions may, in many cases, for simplicity, fulness, and fidelity, be compared with any in the English language. And it is not as a defect that I mention it, but as a peculiar excellence, that his imagery derives an additional beauty from the reflected light of some

mental emotion with which it is connected. Even in his loveliest pictures he does not satisfy himself after he has touched them with the softest tints of the most delicate pencil. He seeks to throw upon them the witchery of a mental light, by an art peculiar to poetry, and where the analogy of painting fails to give us an image. Even when he has succeeded in representing the obvious features of any object, he does not allow our mind to rest upon them, but carries it away into accordant and finer trains of emotion. This, so far from lessening the beauty of his imagery, adds to it a charm, like the accompaniment of the instrument to the voice; or rather, perhaps, the effect is like that of a soft and distant echo to fine music, which never interferes with our perception of the melody, but, on the contrary, harmonizes with it, and, after the closing notes, carries away the mind to still higher imaginings.

From the particular department in philosophy in which Dr. Brown was universally allowed to excel, as much perhaps as from the character of his poetry, a place has been assigned to him among the metaphysical poets. In reality, however, there is little in common with him and the school of Cowley and Donne. In analysis and ingenuity he certainly does resemble them; and there is often a tender simplicity in the feeling, contrasting singularly with a quaintness in the

thought and expression, that reminds the reader of the pensive Cowley. But of all that marks the faults of the metaphysical race—unnatural images, forced conceits, mystical speculations, remote allusions, and misplaced learning—there is nothing to be found in the writings of Dr. Brown.

There is another species of metaphysical poetry from which his must be distinguished. It is from that which delights to pry into the mysteries of nature, and to indulge in speculations beyond the reach of mortal knowledge. There are indeed in his poems many speculations away from the ordinary subjects of human thought. But there is nothing vague, nothing mystical; his precision never forsakes him. There may be at times an obscurity in his poems, and we may feel a difficulty in comprehending them; but this does not proceed from any approach to mysticism, and still less from any indistinctness or confusion in his ideas, or from the want of clearness in his language. The reason is to be found in this, that his finest conceptions lie beyond the range of our usual observation; and in reading his poems, the effect is often the same as when the hand of one with a clearer vision guides our eye beyond the line of the horizon, and makes the dim aerial forms of the mountains of another land rise out of the azure sky.

The objection that an eloquent critic has made

to Collins, that a cloud of obscurity sometimes rests upon his highest conceptions, does not apply in the case of Dr. Brown. The obscurity is not in the atmosphere, but in our feeble vision, that cannot reach so far, or distinguish objects of such exquisite tenuity.

He can be called a metaphysical poet then only from his analysis of the passions, and faithful representations of mental emotions; and from those views of human nature, which, though they cannot with any propriety be called metaphysical, are yet the result of a knowledge of the heart, which could be attained only by a metaphysician. There is in many of his poems the presence of the metaphysical spirit, which in the glow of delight itself is analysing that delight, and which in the buoyancy of easy joyfulness is philosophising in its very trifling. But there is never, in consequence of this, any deficiency of feeling. There is in all his verses the poetical fervour, often great warmth of emotion, and he is not unfrequently impassioned in the highest degree. It is not dry reasoning clothed in the garb of verse; it is not even philosophy entering into the haunts of poetry—it is poetry herself, availing herself of the aids of philosophy, not dividing the sway, but employing her attendant ministry in her wide empire of delight.

Even in those instances where the influence of his intellectual habits is most perceptible, when

he makes it his express object to analyse the feelings of beauty or love or pity, or to give an evolution of the emotions in certain supposed circumstances, the poetic merit of his compositions, or their poetic effect, is not interfered with. He does not, in these instances, engage in the analysis for the sake of arriving at an abstract truth. It is to add to the intensity of the feeling, or at least to the beauty of the representation. In many of his poems, we have, as it were, an *experiment* performed before us; but even then it is not as in those instances of physical inquiry where the beauty of the colours and form of an object is lost, that we may arrive at the essence of the object itself: it ranks rather with that glorious art by which a ray is made to pass through the prismatic glass, where we owe the beauty to the analysis.

The refinement of Dr. Brown's taste ought perhaps to have been adverted to earlier, in this view of his poetical character. That natural taste which arises from purity of sentiment and propriety of judgment he possessed in the highest degree, and, besides, his mind was cultivated by an assiduous examination of the poetry of almost every nation that had made any progress in letters. He was acquainted not merely with the whole body of English poetry, and with those immortal remains of

the illustrious ancients whose genius has given them a community with every age and country,* and who have bequeathed their writings as a common and universal heritage, but also with the general literature of modern times. His Common Place Books are filled with copious extracts from French, Italian, German, Spanish poetry, and with critical remarks upon the writings of many foreign authors. He did not read as a mere source of temporary gratification—he examined into the origin of the delight he experienced, with a view to ascertain the elements of that beauty which does not depend upon local or temporary causes, but is calculated to charm the universal heart. The effect of this is very obvious in his poetry. There are innumerable graces that could be the result only of a taste the most highly cultivated; not so much directly in the introduction of forms of expression, or cadences in verse, or turns of thought that hung upon his memory, as in the movement of all his faculties, in graceful accordance with those of the great spirits with which he held constant communion. He thus looked upon nature with an enlarged sense of all those forms of beauty that are calculated to afford universal delight, and with kindred feelings to the great geniuses of every age.

* Les siècles sont à toi, le monde est ta patrie.

It has been supposed that such a constant familiarity with the great models of excellence is apt to prove injurious to originality of mind. The case of Dr. Brown, however, shows that such an opinion is erroneous. Though there are few authors of whose peculiar excellences we are not sometimes reminded in his poetry, he is perfectly free from the charge of imitation. His hand has lost none of its freedom; nor has his instrument lost aught of its peculiar tone and character, by having been attuned in the great concert of the mighty masters of harmony.

That great refinement of taste is incompatible with great vigour of mind, and that extensive reading is injurious to originality of genius, holds true only of those who are naturally deficient in strength and originality. A feeble mind is apt to sink under the burden of learning, and where there is no original peculiarity of character, the mind takes its colour from the author, or school of authors, that is most admired. But where there is native vigour, reading affords aliment for a greater and more rapid growth of the faculties*—and the more extensive the acquaintance maintained with the works of illustrious men is, the more is the mind freed from the prejudices of a school or of a nation, and from contracted

* Some excellent remarks upon this subject are to be found in Godwin's Enquirer.

admiration of one form of beauty, or one model of excellence. "Read the beautiful continually," was an advice that he often gave to his young friends, "and beauty will be transferred to your own productions:" alluding, not to the beauties that might be borrowed, but to the influence of all fine writing, not merely to afford passive gratification, but to awaken the faculties into sympathetic activity. To suppose that, without an intimate and extensive acquaintance with the models already in existence, we may attain to excellence, is flattering both to our indolence and our pride; and the supposition appears to have the weight of a negative experience in the case of those who, amidst all their reading, display no vigour of mind, and in those who give themselves up to the imitation of some favoured model. But it is obvious that such pedants or imitators would never have been distinguished for vigour or originality in any circumstances. Besides, we have the counter-evidence of almost every illustrious name and of every production that has stood the test of time.—It seems to be a condition prescribed to the ambition of genius, that if it would escape the limits of a vulgar fate, it must join in the procession of the mighty spirits that are advancing to immortality. And Homer and Shakspeare are the only two who have struck out a path for themselves, and who proceed in their own strength alone.

Pope perhaps was the model whom Dr. Brown had most frequently before his eye. He often said that, though there were many things in Pope not to be imitated, every poet ought continually to read him. In delicacy of perception, in correctness, in wit, in melody, he was at least equal to that great genius; in refinement and temper, far superior; in condensation and practical wisdom, the palm must unquestionably be given to Pope.

From the multitude of quotations from the *Pleasures of Imagination* in Dr. Brown's Lectures, it may be perceived that Akenside was one of his greatest favourites. His admiration began at a very early period of his life, and with what success he studied this model may be seen in many of his poems. The following description of the return of truth to the East, attended by astronomy and metaphysics, the sciences familiar to ancient Hindostan, is in Akenside's best manner.

Mature in grace she comes, with many a Nymph
In choral bands attendant, that her step
Circle, and from her quick but solemn glance
Catch every kindling thought. The Star-eyed Maid
Is there, who first at midnight, on your hills,
In sleepless vision, saw the mighty veil
Ascend that hides infinitude, and mark'd
The wonders of the sky, and heard the words
Of planetary converse, orb to orb
Whispering in mystic strain divinest sounds,
Which never but to unpolluted ear
Her voice reveals.—Nor stranger to the groves
That wrapt her early musings, comes the Power

Of self-retiring thought, who, with fix'd eye,
Lost in strange ecstacy, the forms of earth
Beholds not, as they bloom all fair around,
Yet sees them living in the fainter hues
That rise ideal to her inward glance;—
Or, watching where the mad Emotions rage,
Undazzled by the rushing shapes that flash
Too swift for mortal eye, each frowning mien
Of Passion views unterrified, and counts
The fleeting bands, and bids them at her will
Pause.—Nor shall *She*, the voice that wakes delight,
Be absent:—with new majesty of song
More elevate, and warmer-kindled heart
Sweet Fancy comes; and by the jasmine bower,
And sunny plain, and far down every dell,
Shall float in fuller stream the liquid soul.

The following verses cannot be said to be in imitation of Collins, but they are in his manner, and may claim a place by the side of any of his Odes.

TO INDOLENCE.

Come to my bower,
Nymph of the softly-sleeping eye!
Come, where I lie,
Safe from the sun, and mock his feeble power!
The beams, that thro' the foliage stray,
But with thy quivering glance shall play,
And, while its veil they close,
Woo the sweet languor to more sweet repose.

Not Silence weaves
Her waveless gossamer around;
—The pause of sound
Would tempt too wakeful fancy—But the leaves,

Scarce fann'd by Zephyr's lightest wing,
Shall such faint fluttering murmurs fling,
As, lost by fits and caught,
May fill at once and lull the listless thought.

Where Evening sips
Sweet fragrance for her dews unseen,
There let me lean,
Couch'd on soft roses, o'er thy softer lips,
And watch their breathings, number'd all
By thy slow bosom's rise and fall,—
Till tir'd I sink, opprest
With the sweet toil, and slumber on thy breast!

No dream shall rise
Of morrow's weary strife and care:
Enough, if there
A moment's joy the moment's thought supplies.
Her softest gentlest visions shed,
Calm Pleasure, floating o'er our head,
Shall pause in smiles above;—
Rest ev'n our waking, ev'n our sleep all love.

I may here insert a few more extracts, illustrative of the general remarks offered in the preceding part of this chapter. In devotional poetry, or rather, to use a designation employed by Dr. Brown, in *serious descriptive* poetry, I know of nothing more admirable than the lines entitled *Man and Nature*. The poem fills several pages. I can afford room only for a brief extract.

There is a voice which dies not, thy dread voice,
Majestic Nature!—From the mountain cliff,
Where foams the cataract, half seen, and lost

Beneath the sudden crag's projecting shade,
Then starting white again,—the cloud's red gloom,
That bursts in scatter'd thunders o'er the steep,—
And the dark slope of woods, that down the vale,
With all its surging branches, to the storm
Bows, as if awed, before that viewless Power
Which scarce it dares with deepen'd shout proclaim;—
One utterance comes. The whispering streamlet breathes
Its ancient murmur;—and old Ocean's self,
Or gently rous'd, or with the topmost rock
In oft-tried enmity conflicting, sends
The same hoarse accents still, as when his wave
Had own'd no furrowing prow. All lives which Man,
Brief vaunter of a delegated hour,
Boasts as his world of rule;—all lives, and mocks
The feeble sceptre of its passing lord.

No!—That frail-seeming lord shall live,—than Earth
In all the glory of her ancient pomp
More deathless. He shall live, when even that Voice
Of many sounds,—which Ages still have heard,
As if, like moments of eternal Time,
It flowed from everlasting,—shall be hush'd
As things that ne'er have been. Gone, like the glare
Of lightning seen and quench'd, the hill, the wood,
The never-weary cataract, the stream
Soft-murmuring, and the main, that proudly toss'd
Its angry waves, indignant of the storm,—
What eye shall find them?—For a Voice shall speak,
Yet mightier;—it shall speak that word, which all
That hears, in Earth, Air, Ocean,—is no more.

All, all shall perish.—O ye vales, that wrap
My soul in dreams still lovelier, when, beneath
This solitary rock, that with its shade
Of alders gives the runnel at my feet
To dance a watery grove, my eyes have fed
On your wild loveliness, till sleep scarce-felt
Stole on my senses, while your mingling blooms

Yet gleam'd before me, and the waving boughs
And tinkling brook half-murmur'd in my ear!—
Hill of my infant sports,—and thou, fair Cree!
From whose bright waters first my sudden gaze
Started, in terror of that wond'rous world
Of skies as blue and clouds as white, that shone
An unknown depth beneath thy calm expanse!
O ye, that to my early fancy seem'd
Ne'er to have known beginning, ne'er to know
Change, save of day's sure radiance, and of night,
That dawn'd or clos'd upon you!—Must ye fade,
Ye too,—ye loveliest! and no trace remain,
To speak of all your charms?—That highest Power,
Who, shadow'd in the living soul, tho' faint,
Some beamings of his brightness,—may not He,
With such faint lustre, in these transient bowers
Have deign'd sweet semblance of diviner scenes
That fade not,—and, like him who treads its bloom,
Earth, in its splendour, of a nobler world
Bear image!—So, in that celestial home,
Some humble glory still may half recal
To the pure spirit, what the mortal eye,
Unconscious of the shadowy pomp divine,
Oft hail'd, and mortal footsteps lov'd to haunt
With lingering gladness;—as the saintliest joys,
Which bless thro' bright eternity, have thoughts
First fir'd below, and but prolong or fill
The holy wishes that have worshipp'd there.

— — — — —

Not long shall earthly eye rejoicing pause
On earthly loveliness. This fair expanse
Blooms but to charm an onward journeyer's way.
'Tis the brief range that bounds a day's brief toil;
But 'tis the resting-place of one whose path
Is to the splendour of a God:—and Thou,—
O Thou whose splendour waits him:—Thou hast deign'd
Ev'n here, as if to mark his dazzling home,
Meet glories for the lodge of guest divine.

Yes! thou hast circled him in pomp, and spread
Before his gaze a shadowy heav'n. Yet man,
Thus thron'd mid brightness half-celestial, finds,
Within, thy noblest bounty,—the high powers
Of conscious intellect,—exhaustless bliss,
Truth, fancy, sacred song;—what Science breathes
Of calm mild rapture, on the wakeful soul
That scans with self-fix'd thought profoundest things,
Or the gay gladness, that from lyres divine,
As in Elysium's airy slumber tranced,
Floats o'er his dreams poetic. His the joy
Of moral charms more winning,—all that lights
The social bosom, at each generous deed,
Quick, as if virtue flash'd from soul to soul,
With kindred wishes. Thou hast fram'd the heart
To thrill, to glow, to soften, to be touch'd
With mild desires;—in wealth, in power, in fame,
When all is luxury, to turn and feel,
Where envy reaches not, an ampler bliss,
In the soft beamings of Affection's eye.

The following verses are perhaps as characteristic of Dr. Brown's genius as any of his works. They will illustrate some remarks in a former page.*

ON THE SPIRIT OF MUSIC,

As addressing us, in some foreign language of delight, that charms us with the melody of words, of which we do not understand the meaning.

Wake me not thus, with bliss I cannot name,
To doubtful thoughts, and passions half unknown!
Say,—for not Earth's that strangely tender tone!—
Say, what diviner realms its language claim?

* Page 405.

Is Love's blest world thy home,—where on the ear,
In moonlight groves, such gentle murmurs rise,
As, faint, yet tender, like the whispering eyes,
Speak what alone the answering heart can hear?

Or haunt'st thou, where, mid weeping flowers that blow
By sunless fountains, Grief and Pity dwell?
Sighs the sole language there,—that soften'd, swell
From breast to breast, in extacy of woe!

No! Thine the native voice, the words, of Heav'n.—
High thoughts of holiest truth thou breath'st around.
There, Angels hear, and learn.—To us, the sound,
Dark, dark,—but O how sweet!—alone is giv'n.

The following description of the Cestus of Levity is in a very different style, but displays equal talent.

Aërial were the threads;—but nicest art
From air too gross had cull'd a purer part.
What summer suns exhale, in many a gem,
Fresh from the drooping lily's shower-wash'd stem,
These watch'd the spinster-sprite, the softest chose,
And loos'd from odours mingling as they rose.
Then, to due levity to purge the mass,
Thro' Woman's gentle lips she bade it pass.
In tender oaths,—such oaths, from morn to eve,
As pious virgins swear, and youths believe,—
Of endless love, in endless pledges told,
As if the last were felt too frail to hold,
And parting anguish, of as constant pain,
Which nought can solace, but another swain,—
Her momentary soul as breath'd the fair,
Still light and lighter grew the glowing air,
Till, by soft lips with softest pressure wrought,
The very accents scarce out-weighed the thought.
Thus fitted to her fancy's sportful doom,
She gave the well-breathed lightness to the loom.

Each fibre was some passion's tender proof,
And vows, and transports, liv'd along the woof.

— — — — —

A different scene the verge was wrought to show;
Pale grace, and all the beautiful of woe.
Afar, 'mid blazing tapers, o'er the dead
Its hundred plumes a pall funereal spread:
While, on a couch, to softer pomp resign'd
In widow'd loveliness, a dame reclin'd.
With limbs, a nice disorder taught to keep,
And half-clos'd eyes, that almost seem'd to weep,
She leant:—and, duteous to her lord's remains,
Mus'd all the merits of a crowd of swains,
Careful, no worthless mate to give the past;
To her so kind, and ah! so dead at last.
Already many a page of soft relief
Had sooth'd with all the gallantries of grief.
On three she paus'd.—When three so equal woo,
Alas that one must be preferr'd to two!
The billets, that perplex'd her fancy's sway,
On the rich prayer-book's massy crimson lay;
The rest, with psalms and sermons ne'er to roam,
Were heap'd beneath a holier, massier tome.
Where, near, a mirror beam'd, and flung a wreath
Of glory on the toilet's shrine beneath,
'Mid hoods and scarfs, and all the sable art
Which heals with outward grief the inward heart,
The solemn silk, the crape of sadder power,
Dull weeds, that brighter show sweet beauty's flower,
There the same winged form again was seen,
In heavenly service to his mortal queen.
What folds would best a tender sorrow speak,
What shades to lovelier languor melt the cheek,
For her, each gloomy vestment had he tried,
Intent to cull, but cautious to decide.
One cap, whose gather'd crape divinely hung,
On his own head the pygmy Power had flung,
To scan its brighter grace.—The folds, that bound
The front, half hid him, as they clos'd around:—
Yet through them gleam'd his eyes, with laughing wile;
And the clear mirror glisten'd with his smile.

So wove, so pictur'd, was the band that press'd
The softest tissue, on the softest breast.

The account of the occupations of paradise is unequalled in its own style:

For, as, on earth, love-gathering Beauty brings
Increase of power from lore of dullest things,
With smiles and systems, charms alike in all,
The morning lecture as the evening ball;
There, wise in chemic wonders,—better known
The ring and belts of Saturn than her own,—
With student beaux a lovely student sits,
Confounds gay fops, and half convinces wits,
Proud her soft war of pedantries to wage,
And flirt at once with Science and the sage:—
So, even in Paradise, to thought serene
Oft calms the sprightly nymph her laughing mien,
Inquires, pronounces, doubts, with sapient air,
Smiles, and confutes,—philosopher, and fair!

— — — — —

Fir'd by that double meed of love's applause,
They sought of wondrous things each wondrous cause;
Whence flows the sudden gloom, that dims, at sight
Of some new swain, whole circles of the bright,
Tho' not with warmer smile that lover woo,
Than the last gazers, when their smile was new;—
Why a kind whisper, faintest sound to hear,
Yet vibrates longest on the listening ear;—
Why hands, that scarcely own'd a ruder grasp,
Thrill, by soft fingers prest with softest clasp;—
When lives and smiles the mirror's full expanse,
As passing bevies cast a sidelong glance,
What strange attraction, in the image thrown,
To every gazer most endears her own;—
What eloquence the powerful speech supplies,
When lips are mute, and eyes are fix'd on eyes:—
Such mystic themes the gentle wranglers sped,
Doubtful and dark.—But doubt and darkness fled;

Nought left for wonder, when the strife was o'er,
But the sweet marvel of their charms and lore.

I shall conclude my extracts from the *Paradise*, with the description of the "Bowers of Paradise." It would be difficult to point out an equal number of lines in any other author combining so many excellences, especially of execution.

Where Beauty, in her pomp of sweetness drest,
First beam'd a sudden transport on the breast,
Or, lovelier, where her eye kind warmth reveal'd,
And said, or almost seem'd to say, I yield,—
Tho' many a month have linger'd, ere the sod
Which own'd her graceful step again is trod,
Who has not felt a gentle charm serene
Live in each colour of the glowing scene?
O'er bower and dell a tender gladness plays,—
Joy but to look, and luxury to gaze.
—So sweet, so mildly thrilling, on the sight
Shines the pure softness of that heavenly light.
When the swift sun has chas'd a summer shower,
Or evening's earliest dewdrops kiss the flower,
His course, half musing, if the wanderer take,
Down the green lane, or by the tangled brake,
What thousand sweets the mingling fragrance swell,
From humid leaf, bright cup, and drooping bell;
Unknown each odour's part,—the gentle strife
One freshness all of aromatic life!
Not the coy turf-hid violet only greets,
Bashful and mild, with undistinguish'd sweets;—
Lost, in the full delight, what prouder flows
From clustering woodbine, and the flaunting rose.
Tho' throb with quicker life his active breast,
Slow roves the loiterer, by the charm possess'd;
And still, at every step, the changeful bloom
New incense breathes, and every breath perfume.

Such, in those bowers, a joy without a name,
Which all inhale, yet think not whence it came,
Immortal fragrance dwells;—so, hovering o'er,
Still charms, still changes, but to charm the more.
When Beauty carols sweet some mournful lay,
And the last cadence faintly floats away,
Till not a murmur breathe, and all be still
As the warm lip that woke the fervent thrill,
Who has not felt,—of gifted soul to hear
More than light notes that die within the ear,—
A softening pleasure pause, as if around
The air still trembled with some melting sound?
Thus ever, but with softer joy intense,
Unheard, yet almost trembling on the sense,
Lives that pure calm divine:—tho' still the air,
The floating soul of music all is there.

The difference between the first and second editions of Dr. Brown's poems shows sufficiently with what care he corrected his works. He complained, however, of the labour of correcting, and observed that it would have been easier for him to write new poems than to bring those he had written in his youth to that degree of perfection which was necessary to satisfy his more matured taste. This, to a certain extent, is probably the same with every man of letters. It may appear a paradox, but it is confirmed by observation, that where the taste is naturally good, our first efforts at composition are, on that very account, more apt to be constrained and incorrect. The fervour of composition is checked; the ambitious anxiety for perfection mars the freedom and scope of the flight; the powers are not duly adjusted; and it

is not till practice, and the confidence that practice alone can give, bring our powers of composition to a bearing more proportionate to our taste, that our faculties move together in harmonious operation, and enable us laboriously to work our compositions into easy correctness.

In his later works his corrections were less frequent, and several of his productions were ultimately printed from the first copy. In general, however, his amendments were numerous, and it was with difficulty that he brought his work to that last polish which alone could satisfy him. He was still "chasing some fault, or adding some tempering grace." Notwithstanding this, however, his poems cannot be said to be laboured: or if they do sometimes suggest the idea of labour, it is not from any marks of the chisel, but, on the contrary, from the perfect polish to which he has brought such difficult materials.

It is indeed a mistake to suppose that correction is unfavourable to ease or grace. If it is merely a work of judgment, consisting in altering arrangement, and pruning redundancies, there may be some truth in the idea. And it is, no doubt, of importance that the judgment should be exercised free from the heat and prejudices of composition. This, however, is only one step in the process of improvement. Pope has said, that a critic should judge in the same spirit that an author writes; and so the author himself, if he

would correct his work successfully, must bring his mind to the same state as in the actual composition. When we sit down to write upon a subject, we ought not, in the first place, to think what we are to say. Our aim should be, to set the object before our eyes, and when our mind is heated by this contemplation, thoughts and words flow in upon us almost involuntarily. It is obvious, however, that many views of the object may occur, without suggesting signs to embody them. There are shades that flit away before we have time to seize upon them; and it does not always happen that the best word or form of expression is always at first suggested; and even though it should, when the mind is in a high state of excitation, the pen does not move with the rapidity of thought, and much may thus be lost. It is necessary, therefore, to bring the mind back to the same state, if perhaps the fleeting and fugitive beauties may again arise, or, arising, may suggest the *ardentia verba*,—the words warmed into corresponding brightness. It is not so much that we may discover new thoughts, that we thus return to the subject, though I believe in such cases new thoughts will arise, as that we may get a clearer view of it, and represent more faithfully, and with greater delicacy, its fleeting features. The habit of seizing upon the most beautiful forms as they arise, and of connect-

ing them with an appropriate garb of expression, renders this second process of less necessity. Still I am doubtful if it should ever be wholly discontinued. Where correctness is aimed at in this spirit, we cannot correct too much; and without interfering with the freedom of composition, we may write "with perpetual touches and retouches, and with an unwearied pursuit of unattainable perfection."

The high title that Dr. Brown assumes, as the Poet of Woman, is well merited. It would be difficult to name any author who has formed so just an estimate of the character of woman, or who was more exquisitely alive to all that constitutes the chief charm of female society. I heard it remarked by a lady, of whose approbation, (to borrow a phrase from Dr. Johnson,) Dr. Brown would have been proud, that he was one of the few authors who knew how to praise woman, without humbling her by his very praises; and certainly the remark is not without foundation.

His love of domestic life, and the preference which, like Hume, he ever showed for the society of modest women, gave him peculiar facilities of observation, which his quick detection of secret motives enabled him to improve. His *Epistles* show that he appreciated to the fullest extent the all-confiding and unupbraiding gentleness of woman, as many passages in his *Paradise* show that he was equally well ac-

quainted with that fickleness and vanity, which in her is often felt almost as an additional charm. But especially he was acquainted with, and has succeeded in representing the spirit of coquetry, of which vanity is the ruling principle; which, to be exerted, requires only the presence of a being that can admire; which never allows any circumstance to withdraw it from the remembrance of its own loveliness, and of the empire which its loveliness is to acquire; which has a principle of vitality that nothing can extinguish; which, when a lover, who for the moment is loved, describes all his sufferings, thinks only of the lovely self that is so much admired, and of the others who must admire and suffer in vain; which finds consolation in misery itself by the reflection of how interesting or how beautiful it is in its wretchedness; and which is ready to forfeit every claim to admiration, in order—to be admired.

The laws of versification occupied much of Dr. Brown's attention. In the prefaces to his different poems, (which contain much admirable criticism,) he has thrown out many original views upon the subject. His notions in regard to imitative harmony are stated by him in the preface to the *Paradise of Coquettes*. The following extract will be sufficient to convey an idea of his views:

"All, I presume, have felt at times, in the per-

usal of our best poets, the delight afforded by what is termed *imitative harmony*, when the sound, as it has been aptly said, is 'an echo to the sense.' The harmony of which I speak, however, is something far more comprehensive than this mere occasional imitation. Such remarkable accordances are of course sparingly used, and reserved for the most striking circumstances in the narrative or description; since, if frequent, they would not merely interrupt too much the natural flow of the rhythm, but would betray a laborious search of concords, that would bring the very labour painfully before the reader's mind. What is commonly termed imitative harmony is then, as I have said, of rare occurrence. But there is a fainter and more shadowy harmony with the general subject, which, as I conceive, should be throughout the poem the directing spirit of the verse,—a harmony, which does not make itself remarkable in particular lines, but is felt as a whole, in the continued strain, or rather is scarcely appreciated as a separate element, even by those whom it delights, but is distinguishable only by the few, who, not content with being simply pleased, are in the habit of analyzing their very pleasures. In some tale of military conflict, for example, the accordance of the strain is not to be in a single line or two only, that may imitate the rushing of cavalry, or the clashing of swords, or the thunder of the

mightier engines of modern war; but the whole style should partake of the character of the impetuous feelings described, and of the feelings that rise by sympathy in the mind of the reader. It should comprehend much action in little space;—the metrical rhythm should be frequently broken; and the words themselves, which constitute the rhythm, be chosen less for softness than for force. The whole may thus have a harmony that is truly imitative, though there may not be a single line, or portion of a line, to which a common critic would think of applying the term. But the species of separate sounds themselves, and the order of their collocation, which might be the best suited for a description so tumultuous, are surely not the best that could be selected for describing the elegant frivolities of the toilet, and all that gentle warfare for which the toilet prepares. The lines may have the same number of syllables; but he must indeed have little poetic discrimination, who does not feel, that, with the same number of syllabic sounds, there should still be in these sounds a rhythmical variety of some sort, to mark and harmonize with the diversity of theme. What is thus indisputably true of the flow of sound, is not less true of the flow of sentiment and fancy, which should glide softly, or rush along, with a corresponding diversity of movement. A series of the harshest syllables, descriptive of the repose and tender conversation

of two lovers, would scarcely violate more the harmony of which I speak, than a quick desertion of image for image, and thought for thought. The chief harmony, in short, is not with sounds, or other external qualities, but with the internal emotions; and, as these are gay, or soft, or impetuous, the whole character of the strain is to be impetuous, or soft, or gay."*

This subject is surely well deserving of the attention of the poet, and no author's works are more valuable as a study in this respect, than those of Dr. Brown. The art, however, is not to be acquired by rules alone. To have our mind familiarised with the works of the great authors of past ages, and to have our hearts moved with the genuine sentiments of poetry, is the only effectual method to arrive at it.† When there is a vivid emotion in a mind so conformed and cultivated, the thoughts, by a sort of sympathy of faculties, will voluntarily move, thoughts, in numbers harmonious with the emotion of which they are the expression. To introduce such numbers with propriety, to keep them subordinate to the main object, and to make them be felt rather than observed by the reader, is one of the most difficult parts of the poetical art. But nothing is of more consequence to the perfection of poe-

* Preface to the Paradise of Coquettes, pp. liii—lvii.

† This remark may be extended to every excellence in style and manner.

try. Let any one attend to the difference in the flow of the verse of the *Glories of Poesy* and of *Agnes*,—to the abrupt impetuousness, and rapid movement of the *War-Fiend*,—and to the soft languor of tenderness in the *Morning and Evening Pictures*, and it will be seen how perfect a mastery Dr. Brown had acquired in this department of his art.

Dr. Brown paid very great attention to his pauses and rhythm. Dr. Johnson has somewhere mentioned his partiality for the pauses on the sixth syllable of the heroic verse; but the pause on the seventh syllable was Dr. Brown's favourite. Innumerable instances are to be found, both in his rhyme and blank verse. For example:—

"Heaven's sacred light is round thee."
"Is but a joy-like murmur."
"All garrulous of gladness."

He was partial also to the spondaic or trochaic commencement of the heroic verse, to which the example of Darwin has given such currency. He conceived that it added much to the dignity of the measure; as in the line of Goldsmith,

"Pride in their pomp, defiance in their eye."

In many of his couplets, he has made an application of the theory which he advances in his *Lectures*, in regard to length of time and length

of space. He conceived that it may be laid down as a rule, that no poet who makes rhythm an object of attention, introduces the pause on the eighth syllable, without some reference to length of space or duration. This he conceived to be well exemplied in the line by Pope,

"Oh while along the stream of life, thy name."

Many lines, where length is in like manner successfully represented, might be quoted from his own works: as,—

"Then stalks in conscious pride of soul, and leant."

"I sat, oft lingering o'er some half-read tale."

When he wants to convey the idea of haste, he often employs the same art; but in these cases such words are chosen, as do not fill the ear and require to be read without a pause.

"She flung the whole vile volume in the fire."

"The ready portal's quickest opener, slow."

Innumerable other instances of his dextrous use of the arts of composition might be introduced, but they are unnecessary. The delicacy of his perception of melody was equal to that of his other powers; and there is perhaps no poet who has so seldom offended against the rules of prosody. His ear was peculiarly easily offended, and he spoke with a degree of uneasiness of the works that erred

in this respect, that is not conceivable by those whose organs are less finely attuned.

The character which I have given of Dr. Brown's poetry, may perhaps be sufficient to account for its want of success. Its very excellences were of such a nature as to render it unpopular. The theory of Mr. Erskine, contained in a former part of this volume, is to a certain extent just. "There is," as the same very ingenious individual has elsewhere remarked, "a remote and metaphysical refinement of feeling in them, (the poems) that may make them the manual of every pure, enlightened, and elegant mind; but they are not written in the language of plain and gross emotion. The bulk of mankind must know more and feel more remotely before they can be popular. The string touched is too delicate for general sympathy. They are in an unknown tongue to the one half of the reading part of the community."

I must observe, however, that the charge of obscurity, as it was often brought forward, was much exaggerated. It had its origin in no small degree in indolence and maliciousness; and, had the poetry been a little more popular, the vanity would not have been in being *unable* to comprehend it. In proof of this, I may mention, that in scarcely any of the reviews of the first edition was the obscurity of the poems objected to; neither was it hinted at in regard to the poems pub-

lished by Dr. Brown anonymously. Perhaps the most satisfactory theory upon the subject is to be found in one of his own poems, which it is scarcely possible to suppose he did not write with allusion to his own fate. It is entitled

THE HAZARDS OF AN UNKNOWN POET,

AN EPISTLE TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

Yes! thou mayst smile.—The last sweet labour sped
At length a beauteous whole thy lay is read.
Ev'n now the long-wish'd sound thou seem'st to hear
Fame's future voice half-murmuring in thy ear;
And almost think'st, that o'er the glowing line
A thousand eyes are glistening warm with thine.

Yes! smile,—yet trust not, tho' the toil be done,
Thou soon shalt wear the laurel, nobly won!
'Tis vow'd to Wisdom; but how often lives
On Folly's brow the wreath which Fashion gives,—
Frail judge, whom Reason vainly strives to guide,
When Dulness, Envy, whisper at her side.

Thou com'st.—But who thy merit's call shall own,
To name-regarding eyes a name unknown?
No witless Earl stands sponsor for thy wit;—
Lisp'd by soft tongues, by snowy fingers writ,
Thy rhymes ne'er glitter'd o'er the milky way,
From Album on to Album beaming gay.
How then,—O tell, ye critic Belles and Beaux!
Can *he* have merit,—whom no creature knows?

Ah worse than nameless! to thy early youth
Fond Science op'd the shadowy walks of Truth,
And gave thee, with fix'd vision, to descry
The light, that flits but from the wavering eye.
What Powers all space pervade,—what dim control
Rules the quick changes of the realm of soul,
Oft hast thou studious search'd;—and yet,—O hard
To credit!—yet thou hop'st to be a bard!

Think'st thou, his mighty summons to fulfil,
Nature's wide stores should wait the poet's will;
From all that blooms the vale, to all that shrouds
The cliff half-floating in its sea of clouds,
Earth's myriad shapes, in watchful vision caught,
Should live, the treasures of his future thought?
O! think'st thou, *he*, whose best dominion sways
The soul, that gladly trembles and obeys,
Should inward bend his studious glance, to find
Each spring ethereal of the moving mind?
Alas! to critic mobs, the studious hour
That won new treasures to thy fancy's power,
The quicken'd insight, and the letter'd wit,
The charm, the grace, but stamp thee more unfit.
Too wide thy search of Nature's boundless field,
One image, from a store so rich, to yield;
And skill'd in every passion's ebb and swell,
Too well thou know'st the heart,—to paint it well.

How have I seen thee bend, with zeal untir'd,
O'er the warm strain in glowing hour inspir'd,
Pleas'd still, tho' Genius smil'd before, to chace
Some erring shade, or add some tempering grace!
Ah too successful,—happier, didst thou pore,
Not lightest spots to touch, but sprinkle more!
Then haply, when thy page of faults was full,
Some partial band had hail'd thee of their school;
And praise and blame of warring tongues, all loud,
With very noise had forc'd thee on the crowd.

But thou, whose school is Nature, and whose art
Whate'er has charm'd the universal heart,—
Thy dream of proudest glory, to have won
Of all some beauty, and the faults of none,—
What band shall hope new honours from thy name,
What censor fiercely damn thee into fame?
Crowds, whose dull rapture knows not to detect
The bounding shade of beauty and defect,
All praising, in the favourite bards they boast,
Or best remembering what had glar'd the most,
Will see no kindred graces, where the line
Gives not the imag'd whole, they deem'd divine.
Tho' all that glows in SILIUS grac'd thy song,
Without his faults 'twere charmless to the throng:
Yet thine his beauties only wouldst thou call?
O fool! *His* blemishes are beauties all.

— — — — —

But VARRO'S sneer has motives more sublime,—
Too zealous for his friend, to laud his rhyme.
What sin, to cherish many an idle lay,
Where powers so wondrous would be thrown away!

— — — — —

As skilful they, whose malice knows to take
A holy name, and sin for virtue's sake,—
Self-praising prudes of purity, so nice,
That lisping innocence to them is vice.
In love's coy tale, tho' bashful all, above
The blushing modesty of virgin love,
They see, and mourn, with well-feign'd grief demure,
The dangerous sparklings of a flame impure.

— — — — —

But spiteful pruderies Man might vainly try,
If lovelier prudes ne'er join'd the willing lie.
Who knows not MARCIA?—Fond, as tales pretend,
Of her dear lord, she lov'd him—in his friend.
True, 'twas but scandal.—None to Bench or Bar
E'er swore, her spousal fondness went so far;
And her kind husband, who should know the best,
Still clasps his Marcia to his trusting breast.

But nice her virtue now;—what crowds aver
Of soilless purity oft foul to her.
One morn, some luckless rhymes her lord had bought,
Mild, holy, as their gentle poet's thought:
She read, till, as the page she slowly turn'd,
"Love," horrid "love," in four bright letters burn'd.
Shock'd by that single syllable so dire,
She flung the whole vile volume in the fire;
Then strode in conscious pride of soul, and bent
Fond o'er the harp, where filial beauty leant,—
Pleas'd still to hear those tender lips prolong
The raptures of some fashionable song,
Where each new strain was record of a kiss,
And all was panting, glowing, throbbing bliss.
Such perils wait, till Fashion stamp the line.
How many CURIOS, VARROS, MARCIAS, thine!

Yet O! when, conscious how thy lyre excell'd,
Thou seest the meed, it proudly earn'd, withheld,
In that stern hour, if in thy heart shall rise
Scorn of the fool, and hatred of the wise,
Quick chace them from thy breast! Let hope's mistake
For Man no harsher colder thought awake;
Nor, with the homage of a quick-past day,
Lose the kind joy,—which glory could not pay!

And doubt not thine the triumph! Soon shall come
Years, when ev'n baffled Envy shall be dumb,
And Fashion's letter'd slaves,—that must adore
Or scorn,—bend fondly where they scowl'd before.
High souls, that fear'd not o'er thy page to melt,
Shall wide proclaim the tender joy they felt;
And thousands there shall gaze, and thousands still,
And every eye shall glow, and heart shall thrill;—
More sure thy sway, than if, with earlier name,
Kind smiles had softly nurs'd thee into fame.
Dandled, caress'd, the fondling of renown
Thinks all is faultless, where he sees no frown,

Repeats each error, and as years advance,
Makes hab.t what was carelessness or chance;
But he, for whom no flattery twines the bays,
Whose stubborn worth must work its way to praise,
Marks, with sure skill, where Censure's fang would press:
And learns to merit more,—as favour'd less.

Wait then,—and, conscious of thy glorious fate,
O! not with sullen wrath impatient wait;
But mildly tranquil,—if, in wonder born,
Rise at the world's neglect a moment's scorn,—
Think,—and a gentler mood while joy inspires,
Of sons, that soon shall love thee, love the sires!
What though the brook, which yet no runnels swell,
Glides darkling 'twixt the boughs that arch the dell,
Whose pebbles, ever murmuring, seem to rave,
As if their little brawl could check the wave,
Think'st thou, when chill-embower'd the waters run,
They ne'er shall glitter to the brightening sun?
Look onward!—In the opening vale more fair,
The gloom has vanish'd,—but the stream is there.
It spreads for ever.—Where it smiling glows,
Age after age shall bless it as it flows;—
In one pure image to its bosom giv'n
Earth's blooms, and all the sunny pomp of Heav'n.

It is delightful to witness the calm confidence with which Dr. Brown anticipates the fame which, though he was not in this world to enjoy, was to be. The image in the conclusion of the poem appears to me to be exquisitely pathetic, and there is a moral sublimity in the noble spirit with which he repels the intrusion of scorn and discontent, and expresses his conviction of the substantial benefit that he had derived from the severity and injustice of his contemporaries. In reading this

poem, it is impossible not to be reminded of the lines of the noble Surrey upon his friend Wyatt, with which I shall conclude this chapter:

Wyatt resteth here, that quick could never rest:
Whose heavenly gifts increased by disdain;
And virtue sank the deeper in his breast:
Such profit he of envy could obtain.

CHAPTER IX.

DEATH AND CHARACTER.

In the summer of 1819, after spending a few days in the neighbourhood of Glasgow, with his much valued friend Mr. Reddie, he went to London, where, however, he did not long continue. Upon his return, he paid his last visit to Dunkeld, with which he was still more delighted than he had ever previously been. He resolved to spend a part of every future summer there. While there, he began his Text Book, as appears from the following letter.

To Mr. P. Neill.

Invar, Sept. 30th.

My Dear Neill,—I send a little scrap or two of MS. to make a beginning in my text book, that I may not return to Edinburgh with-

out a single sheet,—though alas my stock of penmanship is but little increased since I came here. The rain is now come on, and I may do better.

If you have room then, at press, will you give me a corner of it for a single sheet, and send the proof here if you receive no instruction to the contrary. I mean to publish at present only that first part of my course which I call the "Physiology of the Mind," which words may serve for the running title of the whole, after the Introduction. The Introduction is to be printed exactly like the rest, with the same types and spaces; as there will be a Preface also to be distinguished from it, by some change of that kind. I have not Stewart's Outlines by me; but I think the pages may be made like his, with any change, however, which you may think proper.

We had a very pleasant little excursion the other day to Taymouth and the Falls of Moness. See what it is to come to a beautiful country for the purpose of writing a text book! O that metaphysics were like botany, that one could work at it by the sides of lakes and rivers, or woods, and on the green sides of vales and hillocks.

If you send me a sheet, do not let it come without a few lines from yourself. Think how ignorant we have grown by this time of all the wisdom of the city, and have compassion, I beg,

on poor rustics, who all beg to be kindly remembered to you.

Yours most truly,

THOS. BROWN.*

In the end of autumn he returned to Edinburgh in high health and spirits, and was remarked by every person who saw him, to look unusually well. As for many reasons he was anxious that his Outlines should speedily be published, he engaged in the work with great ardour. His method of preparing it was, not to satisfy himself with a cold and formal enumeration of the heads of his lectures, but to take a distinct subject, whether it occupied one or more lectures, or was discussed in a part of a lecture, and to conceive himself speaking to one of his pupils, and endeavouring, in as short a space as possible, to convey an idea of his doctrines. Those who consider the abstract nature of the points he had thus to discuss, will perceive at once that his work must have required a very great effort of thought.

* I have introduced this letter chiefly as a memorial of the intimacy that subsisted between the individual to whom it is addressed, and the writer of it. The unaffected modesty, extensive information, and general worth of Mr. Neill, gave him the highest place in Dr. Brown's regard. I hope this excellent individual will excuse me for thus introducing his name, and for adding that the pleasure of his acquaintance is one of the many benefits I derived from the friendship of Dr. Brown.

A few days before the Christmas holidays he felt rather unwell. During the holidays he confined himself to the house, and was in hopes that, by taking care of his health, he would be able to meet with his class at their termination. His only complaint at this time was what he seldom failed to be affected with when composing, quickness of pulse, and a feeling of weakness. In such circumstances, losing a little blood had been known to do him good, and his sisters were very anxious that he should again make trial of this remedy; but the fear that it might keep him a few days longer from his duties deterred him. At the end of the holidays, he continued nearly in the same state, and delayed lecturing for a few days. When he again met his class, his lecture* unfortunately happened to be one which always excited in him a great deal of emotion. Indeed, many of his lectures affected him so much, that he found it difficult to conceal from his pupils what he felt. When he read any thing that contained sublime moral sentiments, or any thing very tender, he never failed to be much moved. The lecture to which I at present refer, is in the second volume of the printed work; and those who recollect the manner in which he always recited the very affecting lines from Beattie's Hermit, will not wonder that some who attended his last course should

* Lecture xxxv.

conceive that the emotion he displayed arose from a foreboding of his own approaching dissolution.

'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more:
I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you;
For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glittering with dew:
Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn;
Kind Nature the embryo blossom will save.
But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn?
O! when shall it dawn on the night of the grave?

This was the last lecture he ever delivered.

He had not yet allowed a physician to be sent for. As he had often been in the same state before, he apprehended no particular danger. When Dr. Gregory saw him, he did not think his case alarming, and ordered nothing but that he should keep himself quiet, and not go out. On the day after this restriction, he wrote the following note.

TO DR. GREGORY.

MY DEAR SIR,—As you would not allow me to think of lecturing this week, may I beg you to take the trouble of intimating your opinion to my class. I know that, to any one else, with as few spare moments in a well-filled day as you have, this would be a very impertinent request. But I have learned by long habit to rely so fully on your friendly kindness, that I fear I have begun to think it an impossible thing to intrude on it.

May I beg you, at the same time, to state to my young Moral Philosophers, how much I regret our separation, and what double enjoyment of health I shall feel in being enabled to return to the official duties that connect me with them. That I am under your care, will, I am sure, be considered by them as a good omen of my return being the speedier.

With best regards,
Ever yours faithfully,
THOS. BROWN.

79, *Prince's Street,*
Jan. 17.

The regret he felt in not being able to attend to the duties of his class, and his anxiety to get a person appointed* to read his lectures, injured him greatly.

In the beginning of February he went a few miles out of town, to the country house of his much valued friend Dr. Charles Stuart. The change was for a few days attended with favourable effects. The weather was at that time very mild, he thought himself rather better, and great hopes were entertained of his recovery. But, alas! these hopes were soon dispelled. The mildness of the season was but of brief conti-

* The gentleman appointed was the late Mr. John Stewart, for whom Dr. Brown entertained a high esteem.

nuance. A dreadful storm succeeded, with heavy falls of snow. The effect upon his feeble frame was immediate; and from this time his health rapidly declined.

It was while he was here that I saw, for the last time, my ever-lamented friend. The variety of my avocations had, about this period, prevented me from enjoying so much of his society as, on former occasions; and indeed, since the commencement of our acquaintance, there never had been a season in which I had been so seldom with him. The last time I had seen him he was in the enjoyment of excellent health, and seemed more than usually sanguine in regard to the completion of his Physiology, with which he was busily engaged. Since that, I had heard merely that he was unwell, without the remotest idea that his complaints were dangerous, and I have no words to express my feelings when I entered his apartment.

Vidi egomet duro graviter concussa dolore
Pectora, in alterius non unquam lenta dolorem
Et languere oculos vidi, et pallescere amantem
Vultum, quo nunquam Pietas nisi rara, Fidesque,
Altus amor Veri, et purum spirabat Honestum.

I found him in bed; and there was something in the sound of his voice, and in the expression of his countenance altogether, that at the very first look irresistibly impressed upon me that

there was nothing more to hope. There was no languor however in his *eye*. His face was pale, his cheeks excessively sunk; but, amidst the death of every other feature, his eyes had all their former mild intelligence.

As, upon a former occasion, he had derived great benefit from a voyage to London, his medical advisers were urgent with him to try the effect of it immediately, and, as soon as the season allowed, to remove to a milder climate. "They want me," said he, with a tone of voice in which sorrow and something almost approaching to dissatisfaction were conjoined, "they want me to go to London, and then spend the summer in Leghorn, and a thousand other horrid places;" and then, after a pause, and with an altered tone of voice and expression of countenance, such as marked his allowance for human nature, and at the same time that he was stating an interesting truth, he added, "'tis very difficult to convince them that there is such a disease as the love of one's country: many people really cannot be made to comprehend it." He then proceeded, with a languid and melancholy smile, "but there *is* such a disease—

Nescio qua natale solum dulcedine captos
Ducit, et immemores non sinit esse sui.

Non sinit—how simply and beautifully expressive—it will not *let* us forget it!"

I shall always consider it as a valuable proof of his confidence and friendship, that at this time he intrusted to me the superintendence of the printing of the sheets that remained of his Physiology.

In a very few days I again waited upon him, when I found him somewhat better, and had much conversation with him, of the most interesting nature; but, being entirely confidential, it is not for publication.

The last time I saw him was on the morning of his departure for London. He had requested me to draw out an advertisement to prefix to his work, stating the cause of its appearing in an unfinished state. I mentioned that, for many reasons, I should prefer the notice to come from himself: and seeing me have a pencil in my hand, he raised himself upon his bed, leaning upon his arm, and, after a moment's pause, pronounced the long sentence which is prefixed to his volume, as fast as I could take it down, and without a single alteration. After this, the interview was too sad to be protracted, and with a heavy heart I bade him farewell.

I had not left the house many minutes, when I recollected that, in the sadness of our parting interview, and in the variety of matters we had to speak upon, there was one subject that had been neglected. As he was much exhausted before I left him, I felt the utmost reluctance in so soon

again disturbing him. As I entered slowly, and even unwillingly into the room, his sister drew aside his curtain, and apprised him of my return. When he lifted up his eye, I thought there might be a little surprise, or, at least, that there would be inquiry. But I did injustice to his friendship. A kind smile spread itself over his languid countenance, and in a soft and tender tone of voice, which in all circumstances was affecting, but then altogether overcoming, he said, "I am glad to have another *look* of you." It was merely a look. I spoke a single sentence, heard his opinion, and hurried away.

Even now, I cannot think of this sad separation without the deepest sorrow; and I shall ever consider it as one of the most striking and painful lessons with which Providence has visited me.

At two o'clock on the same day he set out for Leith. Dr. Gregory, who had attended him during his last illness, saw him on board, and was much affected upon parting with him.

Till the ship arrived in the river, he was able to sit on deck a few hours every day. The more motion there was in the vessel he felt himself the easier.

When he arrived in town, Dr. Baillie and Dr. Scudamore were sent for. With the latter he was intimately acquainted, with the former slightly. He also sent for his young friend, Dr. George Gregory, nephew to the late Dr. Gregory

of Edinburgh, with whom he had lived, during the time Dr. Brown was connected with him. The kindness with which this very excellent individual watched over Dr. Brown from the moment he arrived in London, made an impression upon the minds of those who witnessed it which cannot be forgotten. When his sisters remarked to Dr. Brown the tender, and zealous, and unwearied attentions of his young friend, he would say, "You know how often I have told you what a fine fellow he is."

His medical friends thought it would be better for him, on account of the air, to go to Brompton, and for a few days he did seem a little better: motion never failed to do him good. But nothing now could permanently retard the progress of his disease. Every thing that skill in medicine could devise was tried in vain: day after day he became weaker.

One painful part of his complaint arose from the want of sleep. He never enjoyed more than an hour of rest at a time, and seldom so much. Every thing that he took to make him sleep disagreed with him.

During the whole period of his illness he never was heard to utter a complaint. Gentle as he ever was, sickness and pain made him still more so. His only anxiety seemed to be the distress which his illness occasioned to those who were dear to him.

After he became unable to sit up he was carried to the drawing-room every forenoon, where he lay upon a sopha for a few hours. He thought himself much refreshed by this. On the morning before his death he wished to be carried into the drawing-room before breakfast. He had suffered much during the night, but upon his being removed he seemed considerably relieved. When Dr. Gregory called about twelve, he was able to converse with him even cheerfully, and Dr. Gregory thought him better than he had seen him for some time. Soon after his physician left him he became rather faint, and got a little wine, which seemed to revive him for a moment, though he was still very low. His head was raised that he might cough with more ease, and in this state he breathed his last. This was between two and three o'clock of the second of April, 1820.

His remains were put into a leaden coffin, and laid, as was his wish,* beside those of his father and mother.

Upon the death of Dr. Brown, a general and deep feeling of regret was excited.—The death of a man of high endowments must always be a subject of mournful reflection. Besides the loss to society,—the only abiding cause perhaps of regret,—there is a more affecting, and it might almost be said, a more disinterested grief, in the contrast between the exercise of those energies

* See Note P.

that seemed to raise their possessor above the lot of our feeble nature, and the extinction of them all in that sad fate which unites the highest and the lowest in humbling fellowship.

Nec quidquam tibi prodest
Aërias tentasse domos, animoque rotundum
Percurrisse polum, morituro.

Sad however as the death of a man of genius must always be, it may be attended with circumstances that excite a more than usual tenderness of sorrow; and Dr. Brown himself has, with eloquence that may almost be deemed prophetic, described the feelings that his own death excited in all those who knew any thing of what he had projected. "When we survey," says he, in a prefatory notice to one of his poems, "all which the last illness has left of one whose youthful spirit had already dared to form splendid conceptions which were never to be realized, and contrast with what we see the honours which a few years might have given, it is impossible for us not to feel as if much more than life had been lost: and the empire of death seems to have a fearful extension over the future as well as the present, when we are thus led to consider how precariously subject to it has been the glory of names which ages have transmitted to ages with increasing veneration,—a glory that, surviving the ruins of the mightiest empires, seemed the least perishable of all the

frail possessions of which our still frailer mortality is proud." * Applicable, however, as these striking reflections must appear to his own melancholy fate, they luckily are not entirely applicable. Though Dr. Brown died too soon, both for his usefulness and his fame, he lived long enough at least "to realize some of his conceptions," and though these may form but a small proportion, either in brilliancy or in value, to those that he had not embodied, they are sufficient to keep his name in lasting remembrance, and will be a permanent record of his accomplishments, his genius, and his virtues. His Lectures too, were fortunately left, as has been seen, in such a state as to be sufficient of themselves to preserve his reputation. Still, however, no one who knows any thing of the difference between eloquence that is intended to be delivered, and eloquence that is meant for the press, can be ignorant of the very different and more perfect form in which he himself, had he lived, would have brought his views before the public. With all the value therefore that is attached to every production of Dr. Brown's, when we think of the great works he had in contemplation, it is scarcely possible not to feel that all which he has left behind him, can be compared but to some of those magnificent edifices projected by mighty architects,

* Poetical Works, vol. ii. p. 92, 2d series.

which were prevented from being fully completed by hostile invasion, and which now stand enduring monuments of the majesty of human genius, and of the vanity of human ambition.

I might here introduce many extracts from letters received by Dr. Brown's surviving friends after his death. I shall confine myself, however, to the following very affecting passages from two letters of Mr. Erskine to Dr. Robert Anderson.

"*Bombay, 26th August,* 1820.

* * * *

"EIGHT days ago, I saw in the newspapers a notice of the death of Dr. Thomas Brown, at Brompton, in the 42d year of his age. You may imagine how such an unexpected and grievous event affected me. I fear that pulmonary complaints and weakness of the chest have proved fatal to the first metaphysician, and one of the best men of our times. The extent of my private loss I cannot express. For seven and twenty years he has been my most affectionate and valued friend. He loved me beyond my deserts, and the loss of him alters all my prospects of home. He occupied a large space in them all, and none can supply the void. Whether I may ever revisit the land of my fathers, or not, none can tell; but in all my plans of study, in my summer rambles, and my Christmas gaieties, I looked forward to him as my guide and companion. They seem,

for the moment, worthless and insipid where he cannot be. He has fallen, too, at a deplorable moment. It was only in December last that I read the third edition of his Cause and Effect, and wrote him an opinion of it, which he can never read. It seems to me a splendid work, which, I may say, puts metaphysics on a new footing. He had opened by it a full career for his genius in the field in which he was best fitted to shine, and the loss of some of the works which he announces in it cannot now be repaired, either to the world, or to his own fame. Some of the notes to his Cause and Effect settle, in the most masterly way, questions that for ages had been a subject of contention among philosophers. I long to hear more of the melancholy event that tore him away from his friends and his rising reputation. I feel his departure as a sad derangement to all my future plans and prospects. *Quando ullum inveniam parem!* A long farewell."

"*27th May*, 1821.

"Scotland cannot soon expect to see again such a metaphysician, nor I such a friend. It was impossible to know Brown, and not to admire and love him. I am vexed to think how remiss I was in my intercourse with him for many years. I vainly trusted to walking down the hill of life with him, and to lingering with him among the scenes that we had enjoyed in

ascending it. Had he no friend on the spot who could trace a short memorial of his life, his talents and virtues before his last publication? I wrote him two letters rather longer than usual not long before his death. The third edition of his book I had not leisure to read till just at the time I last wrote him. It seems to me the crown of modern metaphysics."

Dr. Brown was in height rather above the middle size, about five feet nine inches; his chest broad and round; his hair brown; his features regular; his forehead large and prominent; his eyes dark grey, well formed with very long eyelashes, which gave them a very pleasing and soft expression:

> his eye was keen,
> With sweetness mix'd.

His nose might be said to be a mixture of the Grecian and Roman, and his mouth and chin bore a very striking resemblance to those of the Buonaparte family. The expression of his countenance altogether was that of calm reflection.

The very excellent engraving by Walker, prefixed to this volume, is from a painting by Watson in 1806, which was thought at the time to be a very striking likeness.

All Dr. Brown's habits were simple, temperate, studious, and domestic. He could not be called an early riser; but neither did he indulge in the

late hours too common among literary men. He seldom studied before breakfast, which took place commonly about eight, but read any light work; or in summer, when the weather was favourable, took a short walk. He never composed immediately after taking exercise, as he thought his ideas less clear then. His time for writing was commonly from breakfast till about two or three; when, if the day was fine, he walked out till the hour of dinner, which was about four. Between dinner and tea he conversed, or read what required little exertion of mind. He thought there was something in the time of day, independently of any other cause, that was unfavourable to mental exertion. About seven he began again his severer studies, and continued at his desk till ten or eleven. In the two periods that he chose for his severer studies, he conceived that we are both intellectually and physically stronger than at any other. These circumstances are minute; but no student will think them too minute. That we may be physically strongest in the morning is very probable, and that there are certain species of mental labour, (such, for example, as depend upon arrangement and dispatch,) for which we may be then best fitted, I would also admit; but, for all that depends upon the finer faculties of the soul, and where any thing original is aimed at, the evening, as I conceive, is incomparably more favourable. In this opinion I am confirmed by the

experience of an eminent friend of Dr. Brown, who connects a faithful attention to what is called the business of life with the habits of a philosopher. It may be allowed, however, that much depends upon the constitution aud habits of different individuals.

Even from the time he was a boy, Dr. Brown was most fastidious in every thing he wrote. This early habit of accuracy enabled him afterwards to write with great correctness, even when he had little time for premeditation.

While he was attending the university he invented for himself a method of writing in shorthand. He generally wrote every thing first in that character; afterwards he extended it in the common character, and laid it aside for some time. He then read it occasionally, making such corrections as suggested themselves; and when he had brought it to the state that satisfied his own taste, he made out another copy for the press.

He seldom read any of his works to strangers before publishing them. With the exception of his answer to Darwin, and some of his early poems, I am not sure that he ever read any of his works but to the members of his own family. To his mother and sisters he read every thing he wrote—often more than once. And I hope I may be excused for mentioning that I was considered as one of this domestic circle. His reason

for not reading his works to his acquaintances, proceeded, I think, from the fear that they might feel hurt if he did not adopt their suggestions. He had sufficient confidence in himself to be convinced, that he would not publish any thing very absurd. He was, however, far from being averse to criticism, though he never courted it.

His corrections upon his own manuscripts were numerous before he sent them to press, but into the proof sheets he seldom introduced any change except such as the mistakes of the compositors rendered indispensable.

Dr. Brown's whole happiness was at home and in his study. No person could have a greater dislike to visiting. When he found himself again in his own house in the evening, he often said, "We have had a pleasant party, but thank heaven I am home." This could not have been supposed by those who saw him in company, as his manners were often exceedingly sprightly. Soon after he was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy, he allowed himself only two days a-week for going abroad. The last winter of his life he did not accept any invitations. A servant who was long with him said that "his master had always a happy face, but that it never looked so happy as when he was coming in at his own door."

His love of Scotland was so strong that the idea of leaving it for any length of time was painful to

him. He had a very perfect knowledge of the language, and thought he excelled more in reading it than in almost any thing he did. He was able to adapt his voice, in the most pleasing and skilful manner, to every variety of the character. He had innumerable old ballads by heart, which he repeated and sung in his own family in the winter evenings with exquisite beauty.

His temper was remarkably good; so perfect was the command he had over it, that he was scarcely ever heard to say an unkind word. Whatever provocation he received, he always consulted the dignity of his own character, and never gave way to anger. Yet he never allowed any one to treat him with disrespect; and his pupils must remember the effect of a single look in producing, instantaneously, the most perfect silence in his class.

In affection as a son and brother he was unequalled. He was a kind and considerate master, and his friendship was truly invaluable.

In every thing that he said and did he had a sacred regard to truth. He was always ready to give praise to what he thought right in an enemy, and he had the courage to condemn what he thought wrong, whoever was the aggressor. He was often consulted by authors in regard to their works, and he uniformly expressed himself in a manner that did equal honour to his candour and critical discernment. Of this I have found many proofs

among his papers. And it is pleasing to see that, notwithstanding the alleged vanity of authorship, his conduct was in many instances acknowledged to be more kind than the more flattering panegyrics of critics less conscientious.

One very striking feature in his character was the love and respect he bore for old age. There was something in his voice, his look, and manner altogether, when he spoke to the old or the unhappy, that is seldom seen. Even the little weaknesses of age, when unattended with vice, seemed almost to excite greater interest in him. He listened with so much kindness and attention to the complaints of the afflicted, that they were consoled by finding such an interest felt in them. And, in his professional capacity, when the griefs of his patients were in many respects imaginary, he had the rare art of convincing them that they were so, without wounding their feelings. The poor and the unfortunate he made perfectly at ease with him—which many with good intentions fail in doing—often, perhaps, from an over anxiety and a too obvious condescension. His art consisted in the kindness of his own heart, which found its way to the heart. And many acknowledged, that while they felt the highest respect for his character, they could speak with more freedom to him than to their own relations.

The tenderness and quickness of his sympathy was such, that he could not bear to see any living

thing in pain." The cold-hearted would have smiled perhaps, had they seen the patient and anxious care with which he tried to relieve the sufferings of animals, that to them would have appeared unworthy of a thought. He considered the duties which we owe to the brute creation as a very important branch of ethics, and, had he lived, he would have published an essay upon the subject. He believed that many of the lower animals have the sense of right and wrong, and that the metaphysical argument which proves the immortality of man, extends with equal force to the other orders of earthly existence.

At a very early period Dr. Brown formed those opinions in regard to government to which he adhered to the end of his life. Though he was not led to take any active part in politics, he felt the liveliest interest in the great questions of the day; and his zeal for the diffusion of knowledge and of liberal opinion was not greater than his indignation at every attempt to impede it. The most perfect toleration of all religious opinions, and an unshackled liberty of the press, were the two subjects in which he seemed to take most interest, and to consider as most essential to national happiness and prosperity. In his judgment upon every political question he was determined solely by its bearings upon the welfare of the human race; and he was very far, therefore, from uniformly approving of the measures of the party to

which he was generally understood to belong. Indeed he often said, that liberty, in Scotland at least, suffered more from the Whigs than from the Tories,—in allusion to the departure that he conceived to be sometimes made from professed principles, with a view to present party advantage, —and still more to the over-readiness that was sometimes shown in making professions of loyalty, when the character for sound principles was unnecessarily maintained at the expense of the cause of liberty. In the College he was uniformly averse to the introduction of political discussions, and disapproved of the practice of sending addresses to the throne. The character of professors, he conceived, like that of judges, should be beyond suspicion. From this circumstance he was often represented as of republican sentiments. This, however, was without foundation. He was a warm admirer of the British constitution, though his admiration was not of that blind and indiscriminate nature that prevented him from supposing it to be susceptible of improvement. Limited and hereditary monarchy he conceived to be perhaps the best that the present state of society admits.

He had the greatest interest in the university of which he was a member, which he showed on various occasions. He was the warm friend of his pupils, and nothing gave him greater pleasure than when he had it in his power to be of use to them. I know, in more instances than one, where he

suggested subjects which he conceived to be suited to the talents of his friends; and the success of the works has shown how correctly he judged. He often said, "I feel very grateful to my young friends for the kind and fearless manner in which they express their approbation of my lectures. They come to me without prejudice, and they have always done me justice, which is more than I have met with from some who should have acted differently."

He was intimately acquainted with the principles of almost all the fine arts; and in many of them showed, that practice only was wanting to insure perfection in his powers of execution.

His acquaintance with languages was great, and he might be said to have a talent for languages. French, Italian, and German he read with the same ease as English. He read also Spanish and Portuguese, though not so fluently. He was as familiar with French literature as with that of our own country. This circumstance had sometimes an unfavourable effect upon his taste, and may be observed occasionally in his style. In commencing the study of a new language, he scarcely at first paid any attention to the grammar, but proceeded at once to peruse some work that was familiar to him. His first step was generally to procure a New Testament in the language he was to study, and he then immediately

began with the Gospel by St. John. A similar method, he mentioned to me, was pursued by his friends Leyden and Murray, two of the most eminent linguists that our country has produced.

In any language with which he was acquainted he read with a rapidity that appeared inconceivable. The period from his receiving a volume till his laying it aside was so brief, that his own relations could scarcely be convinced he had perused it, till he satisfied them by showing his acquaintance with its contents.

I have already alluded to his powers of memory. His sisters used often to try him with twenty or thirty lines from a French or Italian author, and after a single reading he was able to repeat them without a mistake. He thought that his memory appeared rather better than it really was, from the power he had of conjecturing quickly, when he knew the subject, what the author was likely to say.

Dr. Brown numbered among his friends many of the most distinguished characters of the day. Dr. Gregory, and Messrs. Playfair, Russell, and Leslie, were his chief friends among the professors. Mr. Leslie has uniformly shown himself a warm friend of Dr. Brown; and the kindness and respect which this eminent philosopher has expressed both in public and private, has made a deep impression upon all Dr. Brown's friends.

Among the friends of Dr. Brown, particular mention should be made of Lord Webb Seymour. The nature of the friendship which subsisted between them is sufficiently shown by the request that was made to Dr. Brown by the Duke of Somerset, to prepare an account of his brother's Life. This request, the state of Dr. Brown's health, and the variety of works which he had in contemplation, more immediately connected with his professorial situation, obliged him to decline.

Among these works, the first which he proposed, after bringing his Outlines to a conclusion, was to be entitled Ethical Essays. He then intended, in two separate works, to give a theory of Virtue and of Beauty. After this he contemplated a work on the Philosophy of Physical Inquiry. This last work, it is particularly to be regretted that he did not live to accomplish—as in it he would have brought forward some views in regard to the material universe, that would have placed his character as a philosopher in a new aspect. He had a theory of Heat that he intended then to bring forward. Upon this theory he set great value; and when urged to publish it without loss of time, lest others might fall upon it, he said that it was of such a nature that there was no fear of such anticipation. A fragment of the Essay had been committed to

paper when he was member of the Academy of Physic; but it contains merely his views upon the theories of others, and there is nothing in it that can enable us, with any show of probability, to conjecture what were his own sentiments.

He intended also to give a very full course of Political Economy. His first intention was to deliver his Lectures upon that subject in summer; but he was soon convinced that this would confine him too much to the town; and he resolved for one year to endeavour to give a lecture at three o'clock. Political Economy was a subject which had occupied much of his thoughts before he was elected professor. There is cause to regret that all his notes, from different works, as well as his own views, are lost to the public, having originally been written in short-hand, and never extended.

He intended, after having delivered his Lectures upon Political Economy for six or seven years, to resign his situation, and retire to the country, where he proposed to prepare his lectures for publication, and devote himself, without any interruption whatever, to letters and philosophy.

I may here be allowed to insert a view of Dr. Brown's character, which appeared a few months after his death, in a periodical work.*

* The Christian Instructor. The substance of a considerable part of the fourth chapter also appeared in that truly liberal publi-

Among the more prominent features of Dr. Brown's character, may be enumerated the greatest gentleness and kindness and delicacy of mind, united with the noblest independence of spirit, a generous admiration of every thing affectionate or exalted in character, a manly contempt for every thing mean or selfish, and especially for those arts by which the feeble and unworthy raise themselves to situations that they can only disgrace; (a contempt that he expressed with a freedom which could not but be hurtful to his own popularity, where these arts are so common and so successful;) a detestation for every thing that even bordered on tyranny and oppression, a truly British love of liberty, and the most ardent desire for the diffusion of knowledge, and happiness, and virtue among mankind. In private life, he was possessed of almost every quality that renders society delightful; and was indeed remarkable for nothing more than for his love of home, and the happiness he shed around him there. It was ever his strongest wish to make every one who was with him happy; and with his talents of society, it was scarcely possible that he could fail in his object. His exquisite delicacy of perception gave him a quick fore-feeling of whatever might be hurtful to any one; and his wit, his varied information, his classical taste, and, above all, his

cation. A few additions and alterations have been made to preserve uniformity of style.

mild and gentlemanly manners, and his truly philosophic evenness of temper, diffused around him the purest and most refined enjoyment. Of almost universal knowledge, acquired by the most extensive reading, and by wide intercourse with the world, there was no topic of conversation to which he seemed a stranger; and such was his comprehensiveness and readiness of intellect, that he threw new light on subjects that might have appeared most foreign to his habits of thinking. At the same time, there was no obtrusion of abstruse topics or recondite reflections. He was always willing to follow the stream of conversation wherever it flowed, and was as ready to disport with the commonest topics, as to discuss high points in philosophy. So much was this the case, that strangers sometimes considered the accuracy of his knowlege upon subjects which might be supposed unimportant to a philosopher, as bordering on pedantry, and the interest he seemed to take in them as affected. The fact however was, that his active mind embraced and retained almost without an effort every subject of human knowledge, and his kind heart considered nothing as unimportant, which could in any degree affect the happiness of a single human being.—There generally ran through his conversation a vein of easy pleasantry and wit. His wit was peculiar, and predominated over his humour. The consequence of this was, that his combinations, delicate and ori-

ginal as they were in a high degree, were not always such as to excite to laughter. Those, therefore, who have no standard of wit but the noisy merriment it occasions, and who cannot think it natural if it does not flow from a highly excited state of animal spirits, looked upon his feats of intellect as implying an effort which was not always successful; and it required a more refined taste to perceive, that they were in reality the beautiful and altogether unconstrained result of a peculiar conformation of intellect. I have been a little fuller upon these two points in Dr. Brown's character, because they were sometimes misapprehended. I may also here remark, that his extreme affability was sometimes ascribed, by those who would have been ready to represent a colder and more distant behaviour as indicative of pride, to an affected politeness, in which the heart had little share. The very contrary of this, however, was the fact; bland and kind as his manners were, his heart was still kinder; and warm as were his professions of friendship and attachment, whenever he had an opportunity, he showed that he was more ready to do than to say.

As an author, his fate has been singular, and, during his own life-time, hard. Though it was never disputed that he had first-rate talents, none of his works, while he was alive, ever attained any great popularity; and, in the reviews of the day, the name of Dr. Brown is almost the only one of

any celebrity that is never to be found. As a poet he was peculiarly unsuccessful. The many considered it to be impossible that the subtlest metaphysician of the age could be a tolerable poet, and paid no attention to his productions; and the obscurity that common readers found in many of them tempted them to endeavour to turn into ridicule what they did not understand. It was, therefore, not very safe to express approbation of any of the poems; and they had thus the uncommon fate of being more read and admired than praised. Those who were charmed, did not choose to subject themselves to the ridicule of owning it—

thinking what the dull would think, they feared to praise.

It is only as an elegant writer, and as a metaphysician, that the public have been willing to recognise Dr. Brown; and even as a metaphysician, it is painful to reflect that his fame was never equal to his merits. Subtleness and acuteness were allowed to him at the expense of his higher qualities. I am disposed to ascribe this to the very greatness and universality of his powers, and am convinced that he would have been a much greater favourite with the great bulk of readers, had he, with the same refinement and eloquence, been less ingenious and profound. But without speculating on the causes that prevented him from obtaining that general popularity which he so well deserved, and which is now beginning

to be expressed, when, alas! it is too late for him; it may be better to give a view of those excellences which were but partially appreciated, so that the honours which were withheld from him when he was alive may not be denied him now that he is dead, and that the laurels which can never deck his brow, may at least be hung upon his hearse, and strewed upon his grave.

In the philosophic love of truth, and in the patient investigation of it, Dr. Brown may be pronounced as at least equal, and in subtlety of intellect and powers of analysis, as superior, to any metaphysician that ever existed. Or if there ever was any philosopher who might dispute with him the palm for any one of these qualities, of this at least I am certain, that no one ever combined them all in equal perfection. The predominating quality in his intellectual character was unquestionably his power of analysing—the most necessary of all qualities to a metaphysician. In itself, indeed, it is not, in however high a degree it may be possessed, sufficient to make a perfect metaphysician; but it is the most essential ingredient in the formation of such a character. Without it, a man may make many useful practical observations on the constitution of our nature, and from these he may deduce important conclusions as to the wisdom of God, and as to the conduct becoming a man in the various situations in which he may be placed; but this is all that he

can do,—he throws no new light upon the *science* of *mind*,—he is acquainted with the mental phenomena as an artist merely, and not as a philosopher. In the quickness and subtlety of intellect of which the power of analysing is compounded, and which, whatever may be the estimation in which they are held by men of merely practical understandings, are so indispensably necessary to the philosopher of mind, there cannot be named, after Dr. Brown, any one who can be considered *aut similis aut secundus*. It is impossible, indeed, to turn to a single page in his writings that does not contain some feat of ingenuity. But it was in metaphysics that he turned this power to most account, and where the results are most astonishing. States of mind that had been looked upon for ages as reduced to the last degree of simplicity, and as belonging to those facts in our constitution which the most sceptical could not doubt, and the most subtle could not explain, he brought to the crucible, and evolved from them simpler elements. For the most complicated and puzzling questions that our mysterious and almost inscrutable nature presents to our inquiry, he found a quick and easy solution. No intricacy was too involved for him to unravel, no labyrinth too mazy for him to explore. The knot that thousands had left in despair, as too complicated for mortal hand to undo, and which others, more presumptuous, had

cut in twain, in the rage of baffled ingenuity, he unloosed with unrivalled dexterity. The enigmas which a false philosophy had so long propounded, and which, because they were not solved, had made victims of many of the finest and highest-gifted of our race, he at last succeeded in unriddling.

A capacity for analysing like his was not, perhaps, to be expected at an earlier age of the world. As this is the last quality that displays itself in the individual, so it is the last feature that is exhibited in the literature of a country. No ancient nation probably cultivated letters sufficiently long to bring them to this point in their intellectual progress. Certain it is that we should look in vain among the ancients for any extraordinary display of dextrous analysis. Had any one even arisen superior to the age in which he lived, his language would have prevented the full display of his powers; for exquisitely fitted as the ancient languages are to convey complex conceptions, they want flexibility for the nicer turns of thought. A history of the progress of the analytical capacities of language, and a comparison of different languages in this respect, is a desideratum in literature. It would throw much more light upon the intellectual character of nations, and upon the nature of the human mind itself, than seems generally to be supposed.

Since the subject of language has been introduced, I may here make a few observations upon the use that Dr. Brown made of it in his philosophical investigations. The only real use of abstract language, as has been seen, is to make us acquainted with the truths of which the world is already in possession, and to give permanence to the truths which we ourselves may discover. This fact, however, obvious though it may appear, has been disputed by almost all metaphysical philosophers. Language has been represented by them as the *instrument of thought*; and indeed, to read the trifling and merely verbal disputes of many metaphysicians, it would appear that it was often their only instrument. It has been seen, in a former chapter, that Dr. Brown, at a very early period of life, acquired correct views of the true purposes for which language is to be employed, and by a habit of analysing every complex term, escaped completely from what Bacon calls the *Idola Fori*. The habit to which I allude was a very striking characteristic of his intellect; and no account of his character as a philosopher would be complete, in which it was not very particularly noticed. It is impossible to say how much greater efficacy it gave to his acuteness. It derived its origin doubtless from his great activity and ingenuity, and no one, unless he had these qualities in an equal degree of perfection, could arrive at the

same dexterity and power; it therefore detracts nothing from the merit of his discoveries, to ascribe the most important of them to this habit. That I do not over-rate its influence, those who are at all acquainted with his works will admit, when they are reminded of the words Power, Volition, Occasional, Efficient, and Physical Causes.—Dr. Brown himself has remarked in the preface to the third edition of his work on Cause and Effect, that "The very simplification of the language itself, in which we are accustomed to think of the abstract relations of things, is one of the most important contributions which metaphysical analysis is occasionally able to make to the Philosophy of Physical Inquiry,—that highest and noblest logic, which, comprehending at once our intellectual nature and every thing which is known to exist, considers the mind in all its possible relations to the species of truths which it is capable of discovering. To remove a number of cumbrous words is, in many cases, all that is necessary to render distinctly visible, as it were, to our very glance, truths which they, and they only, have been for ages hiding from our view."

In these respects, the benefits Dr. Brown has conferred upon philosophy are inestimable. He has in a thousand instances simplified the language in which we are accustomed to think of

the abstract relations of things, and he has removed and explained many of those words which, more than any other cause, have had the effect of blinding and misleading metaphysicians. This, indeed, is his favourite *organ* in the discovery and elucidation of truth. He does not in his reasonings trust much to analogy, nor to the bringing of an individual example under a general rule; nor does he attempt to gain our prejudices on his side, by addressing himself to our pride of understanding on the one hand, or to our common sense on the other—the usual methods of our metaphysicians. His object is, by clearly defining his terms, to withdraw the attention of the reader from words to things. This is not always perhaps the most agreeable, but it is by far the shortest and the surest road to truth; for if we could all look upon nature herself with our own eyes, unbiassed by the views that others have taken of her, our conclusions would seldom be erroneous. In metaphysics, and indeed in all the sciences where the human mind is directly concerned, the chief art that we have to learn is to analyse, quickly and directly, the language we employ. For explaining and teaching this art, and for evincing its importance, I know of no works equal to those of Dr. Brown; and they might be recommended to those who wish to acquire this art of thinking, in the same spirit that dictated the famous saying of Locke, "If you wish

your son to learn logic, make him read Chillingworth."

To his power of analysis, then, there can be no hesitation in giving the first place, in the view of Dr. Brown's intellectual character. But a mere capacity of analysing, as has been already remarked, though indispensably necessary for all those who would extend the boundaries of science of any description, and above all of metaphysical science, is not of itself sufficient to constitute a philosopher. To form a perfect philosopher, another quality is necessary; a quality which, as Dr. Brown has observed, "sees through a long train of thought a distant conclusion, and separating at every stage the essential from the accessory circumstances, and gathering and combining analogies as it proceeds, arrives at length at a system of harmonious truth. This comprehensive energy is a quality to which acuteness is necessary, but which is not itself necessarily implied in acuteness; or, rather, it is a combination of qualities for which we have not yet an exact name, but which forms a peculiar character of genius, and is, in truth, the very guiding spirit of all philosophic investigation."

The idea is very prevalent, that this comprehensive energy, though involving acuteness, is incompatible with that quality when it exists in a more than usual degree. And it certainly has generally happened that those who have been

distinguished for their ingenuity, have wasted their powers in unprofitable displays of subtlety, satisfied with detecting error, or discovering particular truths, without arranging the result of their analytical efforts into a regular system; and that men of more comprehensive minds have employed themselves in recording the more obvious analogies of things, without attending to their minor differences, in consequence of which their arrangements, however practically useful, have been philosophically erroneous and liable to be exposed by subtler intellects. It might easily be shown, from the principles of our nature, that this has arisen merely from accidental causes, and that there is no real incompatibility between the two qualities. But an abstract discussion of the question is unnecessary: the case of Dr. Brown sets it at rest. His comprehensiveness, though not equally remarkable, was almost equally remarkable with his acuteness. And I recollect no philosopher to whom, with so much justice, can be applied the admirable passage in Bacon, where, in his address *Ad Regem Suum*, he paraphrases the sacred comparison of the heart of the king to the sand of the sea—*Cujus quanquam massa prægrandis, partes tamen minutissimæ; sic mentis indidit Deus majestati tuæ crasim plane mirabilem, quæ cum maxima quæque complectatur, minima tamen prehendat, nec patiatur effluere: cum perdifficile videatur, vel potius impossibile in natura, ut idem instrumen-*

*tum et grandia opera et pusilla apte disponat.** It is by the union of these two qualities that Dr. Brown may most easily be distinguished from other philosophers. For example, he may thus easily be distinguished from Smith and Hume. Smith had more, perhaps, of the comprehensive quality, and Hume was nearly as acute: but Smith was inferior in metaphysical acumen; and Hume, with all his ingenuity, could not rear a consistent system. The names of Hume and of Smith may be considered as representative of two numerous classes of philosophers. There is another class, at the head of whom may be placed Dr. Reid, who employ themselves chiefly in the induction of facts, in the choice of which they are determined by their practical importance alone, and who scarcely pay any attention to the relations that bind them together. From this class Dr. Brown may be more easily distinguished than from any other. Facts to him had little other interest, but as they were to be analysed and arranged. And his arrangements were made not according to the accidental uses, but according to the essential properties of objects. He valued truth for its own sake, and no accidental interest or temporary subserviency to particular purposes had any influence with him. He was, in the strictest sense of the word, a man of science. To this last circumstance, more, perhaps, than to any

* De Augmentis Scientiarum, lib. i.

other, is to be ascribed the fact, that the fame he has enjoyed is so little when compared with the character that has been given him. The great bulk of readers value truth, at least such truth as does not interest their passions, merely in reference to its application to use; and abstract truth can never be very useful to any one in the intercourse of life, till the progress of observation and of science brings remote relations frequently before the view of a great proportion of the members of society. The more subtle and profound, therefore, that a philosopher is, if he does not join to his subtlety and comprehensiveness of intellect a practical understanding, the more contracted, for a time, must be his fame. I am aware, accordingly, that my opinion as to the rank that Dr. Brown holds among philosophers must appear to many to be higher than his merits entitle him to. But I am confident, that those who are able to judge for themselves, and who will carefully compare the views of Dr. Brown with the views of the philosophers that preceded him, will ultimately confirm the decision.

Such, then, were Dr. Brown's powers for philosophising. Next to the powers of a philosopher for discovering truth, is his capacity for illustrating it. I shall now, therefore, make a few remarks upon Dr. Brown's style, understanding by that word all those qualities that are concerned in the statement of a doctrine, or of a system.

The circumstance that is most remarkable in Dr. Brown's style is the synthetical manner in which he states his doctrine. Though the most analytical of all philsophers in his inquiries after truth, he is the most synthetical in delivering the result of them. Some writers lead the reader to a general conclusion by the same path that they themselves pursued in the discovery. They start the doubts that at first occurred to themselves; they suggest the solutions that satisfied their own minds; and thus they proceed, appearing to follow rather than to lead their readers. But Dr. Brown pursues a method exactly contrary. After bringing a subject, by a cautious induction of innumerable particulars, to the greatest degree of generality, he then opens it up to the reader in the most systematic manner, presenting the separate truths, neither in the relation in which they suggested themselves to his own mind, nor in the way in which they may insinuate themselves most easily into the mind of the reader, but in the relation which they hold to each other in nature. To those who love truth for its own sake, this is decidedly the best method, and it is desirable that it should be followed in all scientific works. It may, perhaps, have a more uninviting appearance, but it is not in reality more difficult. There is no royal road, as has been observed a thousand times, to science of any kind; if we wish to have a systematic view of a

subject, we must submit to much abstract thinking; and it is better to begin with this at once, than to follow any other method which will only in the end lead us to the point where we ought to have begun, or perhaps satisfy us with false or superficial views. An architect, to have an accurate idea of a fabric, would prefer a single view of it, with a plan, on a reduced scale, of all its different apartments, their uses, and mutual connexions, to the most exquisite collection of sketches from different distances in the most picturesque or beautiful points of view, with an unconnected description of one or two of its ampler chambers and more spacious galleries.

This systematic method is especially necessary in metaphysics, where, from the evanescent nature of the objects of our attention, we are apt to be satisfied with vague and undefined ideas. But though it may be the most philosophical, it is by no means the most likely to be popular; and accordingly very different plans have been followed by our most celebrated metaphysicians. Mr. Stewart, for example, to relieve the tedium of abstract disquisition, introduces innumerable illustrations. When Hume states a new doctrine, he opens his subject much in the same way that he would in conversation with a friend; he adduces instances to stimulate and enlighten the mind of the reader; and he uses, not merely the familiar phrases of conversation, but abounds al-

so in those rapid transitions, those frequent repetitions, those varied representations, that would do better in society than in philosophical discussion. Smith is much more systematical; but he too often introduces his illustrations in such abundance that we forget, in the interest of the subordinate details, the general doctrine he is insisting upon. The peculiarities which I have mentioned, form, to the great bulk of readers, the chief charm of these writers. Few minds are fitted for relishing metaphysics, and most of those who read our popular metaphysical writers, derive the greater part of their delight, not from the abstract doctrines they contain, but from the practical remarks, the precepts of conduct, and the delineations of character, which occur in such abundance as to afford sufficient exercise to the mind, without any very close reference to the doctrines in question. Dr. Brown's writings abound in these beauties; but they are introduced in such a manner, that no one who reads merely to pass an idle hour, will have any great pleasure in them; for they are never introduced for their own sake, but merely as the best illustrations of the doctrine he is maintaining. Accordingly, though in some cases his illustrations are as numerous as those of Mr. Stewart, and though they are scarcely less classical and elegant, still the circumstance most prominent in them is their relation to the great whole. The mind of

the indolent reader is not allowed to rest upon the subordinate details without any reference to the truths that go before, and the truths that are to follow. Though there is never wanting what will delight the refined taste and the generous heart, still the predominating pleasure must be that which results from the perception of relation; and where any one is not capable of, or does not relish this pleasure, the works of Dr. Brown can be but imperfectly estimated by him.

This peculiarity of Dr. Brown's style adds much to the precision and satisfactoriness of his reasonings. In Mr. Stewart's writings, example follows example in beautiful and slow succession. This, however, does not always add to the perspicuity of his style, or to the conclusiveness of his reasonings; for the discursive powers are lulled asleep amidst the pleasing excitation of the other faculties. But the more examples Dr. Brown gives, the clearer do his doctrines become, from the circumstance of the relation of the different parts being that which our attention is always chiefly directed to; just as the strength of a bridge is increased by every addition of weight. The same objection that has been made to the works of Mr. Stewart, cannot be urged against those of Mr. Hume, as his illustrations are seldom such as to mislead by interesting the feelings. His defect lies in his inability,

or in his unwillingness, to state his views systematically. He trusts little to the acuteness, and nothing to the comprehensiveness, of the reader; he therefore illustrates every position, and repeats it in a thousand varied forms. The consequence is, that in perusing any of his speculations, we think we have a clear conception of his doctrines, but when we come to the termination, we find it scarcely possible to give a summary view of what we have been reading. But Dr. Brown himself never loses, or allows us to lose, the general in the particular. In this way, though it requires a greater effort to comprehend any single passage, yet, when once understood, it is infinitely clearer, and more easily remembered. Hume carries us through a tract of country, showing us, at every step, distinctly, the way before us, and amusing us with new views and charming prospects.* But when we come to the end of our journey, we find that our progress has been little or nothing. We were never at any great distance from the point at which we started. We have been traversing merely a confined spot, and even of it we have had only many beautiful glimpses, but no commanding view. Stewart, again, presents us with a wider and nobler prospect, more beautiful in itself, and richer in local

* It can scarcely be necessary to remind the reader that I speak only of the charms of his style.

associations. There is every thing to delight the eye, the ear, the imagination, and the heart. But the masses of shade, magnificent though their effect often be, and the warmth of the atmosphere, which is greater than its transparency, leave the features often obscure, and the outline ill-defined. Dr. Brown conjures up a scene where there are as many beautiful sights and sounds, but they are all in one mighty prospect, and lovely as the separate parts are, our attention is chiefly occupied with the relative position of the mountains and the course of the rivers. He leads us, too, through classic ground, and over spots that have been dignified by acts of heroism and virtue. Still, however, we are continually reminded, that it is the great outlines of the landscape which we have to do with, and not with its individual charms; and while our admiration is excited for those who, on the noble fields of freedom, bled for their friends and their beloved country, we are never allowed to forget that our present object with these noble scenes is only as parts of the great and magnificent landscape whose features we are to trace.

Next to this peculiarity in the manner of bringing forward his doctrines, is the precision of his style. He not only brings out the idea, but the very shade of the idea. He leaves nothing to the imagination of the reader, but goes on limiting and explaining his terms and his positions, till his

doctrines stand forth with every outline clearly defined, and every feature finished with laborious exactness. For this purpose, his style is eminently abstract. It is not, however, abstract, from being the translation of his ideas into the language of a system, which is too often the characteristic of metaphysical writers; neither is it like the abstractness of those, who, when they have to do with a subtle idea, use a general or philosophic term, which does little more than direct the mind of the reader into the proper channel, and is loose and deficient in precision from its very abstractness: his style is abstract, from his stripping his language of all those words that conjure up ideas or feelings merely conventional, and by his using a language of the same kind that we use in Algebra, which is perfectly general in its own nature, but, from the signs by which it is connected, is at the same time perfectly precise.

There is another peculiarity in the style of Dr. Brown, arising from the great activity and quickness of his mind. This takes away what is called *repose* from his composition. Every sentence —every clause—every term, is instinct with life. "The pauses of his eloquence," to apply to him a criticism that has been made on the style of another eminent writer, "is filled up by ingenuity. Nothing plain is left in the composition." Amidst the great activity of all his faculties, however, it is curious to remark, that his power of analysis

has still the ascendency, and gives a colour to all his other powers. Many writers show equal activity of intellect; but as it takes a different direction, the effect is altogether different. Some accumulate illustration upon illustration—they clothe the same idea in different language—they repeat it with increased emphasis—they show it in different lights—they shed upon it the reflected lustre of analogous truths—they adorn it with wit, and in a thousand different ways amuse and relax the mind of the reader. But Dr. Brown is wholly employed in defining and limiting his positions. Having once found out the best point in which any doctrine can be shown, he confines the view to that alone, and his activity is exerted to remove every obstacle that may prevent us from seeing it in that light. As we observed before, he leaves nothing to the imagination of the reader, he is constantly employed in filling up every part, and trusts nothing to a general outline. His taste, his genius, and his wit, are in constant exercise; but they are all under the direction of his reasoning faculty—they are employed solely to convey more vivid and more precise ideas of the great doctrine. In this way, it is obvious that his writings cannot be understood without a constant exertion of mind, similar in its nature to that made by the author himself. To most readers this is too great an exaction. They delight to repose in generalities,

The minor shades of difference appear unimportant to them. When their attention is called to them, they lose sight of the principal distinctions. It has thus always been the fate of subtle writers, that they appear to the great bulk of readers incorrect. People do not believe, because they cannot put themselves to the trouble of comprehending; and it may be asserted without a paradox, that Dr. Brown would have produced a greater effect, had he shown less talent, and that his reasoning appears to many inconclusive, because he has left it altogether unanswerable.

As a foil to so many and so great excellences, it may be allowed, that Dr. Brown often shows a preference of what is subtle * to what is useful, and is sometimes more ingenious than solid. His style is too abstract, and his illustrations are not always introduced in the manner that might give them most effect. Many quaintnesses both of thought and expression are to be found in his writings. His sentences are often long, sometimes involved; and there is an occasional obscurity, arising from his anxiety to prevent the possibility of misapprehension. He had a perfect mastery over language; but sometimes he lessens the effect, by showing that he has this mastery

* With some qualifications, the remark of Buonaparte upon the character of La Place may be applied to Dr. Brown: "Il cherchait des subtilités partout...et portait enfin l'esprit des infiniment petits dans l'administration."

He too often, perhaps, uses a word in an unexpected sense, and then, by an analysis, shows that the application is just: a species of exquisite but quaint refinement that he learned from the younger Pliny. His diction, however, is idiomatic and pure to a degree that is seldom attained by Scotch writers. It may be remarked, in general, that simplicity is the quality in which he is most deficient, as subtlety is that in which he most excels.

As the many excellences of Dr. Brown's writings are not without some accompanying defects, so his character, as might be supposed, did not attain to perfection. His imperfections, however, were comparatively few. The love of fame—*that last infirmity of noble minds*—and a tendency to give too little credit to the motives of those who differed from him in sentiment, were the chief, I had almost said the only, shades to the brightness of his excellences.

To these remarks upon Dr. Brown's character, which were written soon after his death, I have nothing more to add. All that was then said, as to his being the first of modern metaphysicians, has been confirmed by public opinion to a degree that I could not have anticipated; the reception of his Lectures has been favourable to a degree of which, in metaphysical works, there is no parallel; and his virtues as a man are almost universally allowed to be in beautiful *accordance with his talents as a philosopher.*

The great tendency of Dr. Brown's writings, is to inspire with the feeling of the superiority of knowledge to those objects which limit the ambition of the generality of mankind; and to teach, that knowledge itself is subordinate to virtue. This also was the great *moral* of his life, though I am well aware how feebly it is felt in my representation of it, and with how much more persuasive impressiveness it might have been taught, had the subject fallen into abler hands. It is now, however, too late to indulge in expressions of regret; nor do I wish to deprecate the severities of criticism by ill-timed professions of conscious deficiencies. In so far as I myself am concerned, my work, whatever its reception may be, has been its own reward, in leading my mind to those subjects that occupied me so much in the years when I enjoyed the society of him who was my master and my friend, and in bringing that master and friend so constantly before me. And, even in regard to others, I shall not consider my labour as altogether vain, if I shall succeed in impressing, in any instance, upon the youthful mind, that the most splendid talents do not supersede the necessity of incessant application; that where these are conjoined they must ultimately succeed; and, above all, that, even where their success is the greatest, the highest intellectual eminence is felt to be a less enviable fame, than that of having cultivated kind, and generous, and virtuous sentiments.

NOTES.

NOTES.

Note A. Page 2.

Dr. Brown was lineally descended from Murdoch, the second son mentioned in the following extract from the *Macfarlane MSS.* lately published along with *Symson's Description of Galloway.*

"King Robert, being by a part of the English army defeat in Carick, fled into the head of Lochdie to a few of his broken partie, and lodging in a widow's house, in Craigencallie, in the morning she, observing some of his princely ornaments, suspected him to be a person of eminence, and modestly asked him in the morning, if he was her Leidge Lord. He told her Yes, and was come to pay her a visit; and asked her if she had any sons to serve him in his distress. Her answer was, that she had three sons to three severall husbands; and that if she was confirmed in the truth of his being their sovereign, they should be at his service. He askt her farther, if she could give him anything to eat. Her answer was, there was little in the house, but agust meal and goats' milk, which shou'd be prepared for him; and while it was making ready, her three sons did appear, all lusty men. The King askt them, if they wou'd chearfully engage in his service, which they willingly assented to; and when the King had done eating, he askt them what weapons they had, and if they could use them; they told him they were used to none but bow and arrow. So, as the King went out to see what was become of his followers, all be-

ing beat from him but 300 men, who had lodged that night in a neighbouring glen, he askt them if they could make use of their bows. M'Kie, the eldest son, let fly an arrow at two ravens, parching upon the pinacle of a rock above the house, and shot them through both their heads. At which the King smiled, saying, I would not wish he aimed at him. Murdoch, the second son, let fly at one upon the wing, and shot him through the body; but M'Lurg, the third son, had not so good success.

" In the meantime, the English, upon the pursuit of K. Robert, were incamped in Moss Raploch, a great flow on the other side of Die. The King observing them, makes the young men understand that his forces were much inferior. Upon which they advised the King to a stratagem, that they would gather all the horses, wild and tame in the neighbourhood, with all the goats that cou'd be found, and let them be surrounded and keept all in a body by his soldiers in the afternoon of the day, which accordingly was done. The neighing of the horses, with the horns of the goats, made the English, at so great a distance, apprehend them to be a great army, so durst not venture out of their camp that night; and by the break of day, the King, with his small army, attacked them with such fury, that they fled precipitantly, a great number being killed; and ther is a very big stone in the centre of the flow, which is called the King's Stone to this day, to which he leaned his back, till his men gather'd up the spoil; and within these thirty yeares, there were broken swords and heads of picks got in the flow, as they were digging out peats.

" The three young men followed close to him in all his wars to the English, in which he was successfull, that at last they were all turn'd out of the kingdom, and marches established 'twixt the two nations; and the soldiers and officers that followed him were put in possession of what lands were in the English hands, according to their merite. The three brothers, who had stuck close to the King's interest, and followed him through all dangers, being askt by the King, what reward they expected? answered very modestly, That they never had a prospect of great things; but if his Majesty would bestow upon them the thirty pound land of Hassock and Comloddan, they would be very thankfull; to which the King chearfully assented, and they kept it long in possession.

" Murdoch, the second brother, is the only family that has

tinued in the name lineally. The eldest assumed for coat of arms, two ravens proper upon a chief argent, with an arrow through both their heads, gules, the field gules. Murdoch carrys argent on a chief gules, a raven volant proper, with an arrow through his body. Of the second, the farthest extent of this gentleman's estate terminates upon Lochdie, from whence the water of Die runs, being a great lake full of pyks, and ane excellent fish, called a salmond-trout, being red in the fish, and the sides all enamuled with red spots."—*Symson's Description of Galloway*, pp. 139—142.

Note B. Page 21.

The Elder Pliny not only marked but made extracts from every work that he perused. "Adnotabat excerpebatque; nihil enim legit quod non excerperet. Dicere etiam solebat, nullum esse librum tam malum, qui non aliqua parte prodesset." The excellent Dr. Watts seems to have followed a method still more laborious. His biographer informs us that his method of study was to impress the contents of his books upon his memory by abridging them, and by interleaving them, to supply one system with supplements from another. This method, in consequence of his example, and of that of his disciple, the amiable, and pious, and laborious Doddridge, has been much attended to amongst a certain class of the English Dissenters. In early life Dr. Brown followed it to a certain extent, and has filled many pages with extracts from favourite authors. In general, however, the extracts are brief, and seem to be selected chiefly on account of some beauty in the thought or expression. He found it consumed less time to compare the thoughts of philosophical writers by making a direct reference to their works, which his large and well-chosen library enabled him to do. The following extract from the Life of Young,* relating to his habits in this particular, may not be uninteresting: "The attention which Young bestowed upon the perusal of books, is not unworthy imitation. When any passage pleased him, he appears to have folded down the leaf. On these passages he bestowed a second reading. But the labours of man are too frequently vain. Before he returned to much of what he had once approved, he died. Many of his books which I have seen are, by those notes of approbation, so swelled beyond their real bulk that they will hardly shut."

* By Herbert Croft.—See Johnson's Lives.

Among these various methods, the one followed by Dr. Brown seems the simplest, and the best, at least to those who have it in their power (the only power for which it can ever be allowable for a scholar to wish for wealth) to collect a library.

Having mentioned his habits in regard to reading, I may perhaps have no better opportunity than the present, to state that in his own meditations he, to a certain extent, followed the rule laid down by Locke, of writing down at the moment his thoughts as they arose. These two methods, the one in regard to reading, the other in regard to thinking, are of more value to the student than any general rules with which I am acquainted. As the passage to which I allude in Locke is not in any of those of his writings which are most usually put in the hands of students, I make no apology for quoting it. It is in every respect strongly characteristic of him, and in nothing more than in the kind earnestness with which he urges his friend to follow his direction.

"You say you lose many things because they slip from you. I have had experience of that myself, but for that my Lord Bacon has provided a sure remedy. For, as I remember, he advises somewhere never to go without pen and ink, or something to write with, and to be sure not to neglect to write down all thoughts of moment that come into the mind. I must own I have omitted it often, and often repented it. The thoughts that come often unsought, and, as it were, drop into the mind, are commonly the most valuable of any we have, and therefore should be secured, because they seldom return again. You say also that you lose many things, because your own thoughts are not steady and strong enough to follow and pursue them to a just issue. Give me leave to think that herein you mistake yourself and your own abilities. Write down your thoughts upon any point as far as you have at any time pursued them, and go on with them again some other time when you find your mind disposed to it, and so till you have carried them as far as you can, and you will be convinced that, if you have lost any, it has not been for want of strength of mind to bring them to an issue, but for want of memory to retain a long train of reasonings which the mind, having once beat out, is loth to be at the pains to go over again, and so the connexion and train having slipped the memory, the pursuit stops, and the reasoning is neglected before it comes to the last conclusion. If you have not

tried it, you cannot imagine the difference there is in studying with and without a pen in your hand. Your ideas, if the connexions of them that you have traced be set down, so that, without the pains of recollecting them in your memory, you can take an easy view of them again, will lead you farther than you could expect. Try, and tell me if it be not so."

Note C. Page 25.

The doctrine of Mr. Stewart to which I allude in the text, is that which relates to the state of the *mind* in sleep, what faculties then continue to operate, and what are then suspended. Mr. Stewart conceives, that "in sleep those operations of the mind are suspended which depend on our volition," the cause of which he supposes to be, that "the will loses its influence over those faculties of the mind and those members of the body which during our waking hours are subjected to its authority." The answer that Dr. Brown made to this theory was not founded upon those peculiar views respecting the nature of the will which even at this time were beginning to suggest themselves to his mind, but upon the inconsistency of the theory itself with the doctrine that Mr. Stewart elsewhere maintains, that memory depends upon an effort of attention which in its turn depends upon the exercise of the will. There could, upon Mr. Stewart's own views, be no memory in sleep; which is contrary to all experience. M. Prevost states the argument with great brevity and accuracy: "*Sans l'action de la volonté point d'effort d'attention; sans quelque effort d'attention point de souvenir. Dans le sommeil, l'action de la volonté est suspenduc. Comment donc reste-t-il quelque souvenir de songes?*"

Mr. Stewart has alluded to this objection in a note to the second edition of his work.

"Soon after the publication of the first edition of this work, a difficulty was started to me with respect to my conclusions concerning the state of the mind in sleep by my excellent friend M. Prevost of Geneva, a gentleman who has long held a high rank in the republic of letters, and to whose valuable correspondence I have often been indebted for much pleasure and instruction. The same difficulty was proposed to me nearly about the same time by another friend, (then at a very early period of life,) who has since honourably distinguished himself by his observations on Dr. Dar-

win's *Zoonomia*,* the first fruits of a philosophical genius, which I trust is destined for yet more important undertakings."

As Mr. Stewart does not profess to meet the objection with a direct answer, and rests his defence upon the soundness of his general principle, though he may not be able to explain from it synthetically all the phenomena with which it is concerned, it is not necessary to enter farther into the question. Indeed, as Mr. Stewart's doctrine in regard to the influence of the will upon the current of our thoughts is directly at variance with the principles of his disciple's philosophy, it would be attended with many disadvantages to enter upon the general question merely in reference to a single and that not a very important application of it. The whole of Mr. Stewart's note, however, is well worthy of perusal.

NOTE D. Page 42.

The first volume of *Zoonomia* was published in 1792, the second in 1796. Dr. Brown's *Observations* relate chiefly to the first volume, and he has avoided any particular strictures on the nosology of the second. He conceives that one remark is applicable to the whole; that it is inconsistent with the fundamental principle of the theory by which one faculty of the sensorium cannot increase or decrease without a corresponding increase or decrease of others, madness and fever excepted. The plan that Dr. Brown has followed, is to apply the general principles of Darwin in order to refute his particular doctrines. As it is the leading principles that he thus reviews, he has departed in several instances from Darwin's general arrangement, and frequently condensed several sections into one.

NOTE E. Page 78.

Extracts from the Minutes of the Academy of Physics, vol. i. 1797, 1798, 1799.

January 7th, 1797.

The following gentlemen having resolved to form themselves into an association, for the investigation of Nature, the laws by which

* "Observations on the *Zoonomia* of Dr. Darwin. By Thomas Brown, Esq. Edinburgh, 1798."

her phenomena are regulated, and the history of opinions concerning these laws, and to consider preliminary business.

Mr. Erskine, *President.*

Mr. Brougham. Mr. Birbeck.
Mr. Reddie. Mr. Logan.
Mr. Brown. Mr. Leyden.
Mr. Rogerson.

The following associated gentlemen were absent:

Dr. Robert Anderson, *Honorary Member.*
Mr. Robert Robertson. Mr. Lang.
Mr. Craig, *Corresponding Member.*

After the Meeting was constituted, it was resolved that the Association should be denominated the *Academy of Physics.*

Mr. Brougham proposed to the Academy a plan of business, which was adopted with a few modifications.

SECTION I.

The objects of the Academy shall be,

1. Pure Mathematics, or the Philosophy of Quantity.

2. Mixed Mathematics, or the Philosophy of Motion and its Effects, comprehending subjects in which the data are inductive, and the reasoning mathematical.

3. The Physics of Matter, or the Philosophy of Body, in which the data and reasonings are both inductive.

4. The Physics of Mind, or the Philosophy of Mind, excluding religious controversies and party politics. Mind is either general or individual, the physics of the former we term general politics.

5. The History of Events, Opinions, Systems, &c.

SECTION II.

The Academy shall consist of Ordinary, Honorary, and Corresponding Members.

1. The duty of Ordinary Members shall be to attend the Meetings of the Society, to communicate observations on papers read, and to share with the Academy their discoveries, improvements, and inquiries, especially on scientific subjects.

Every Ordinary Member must attend at least once a month under penalty of writing a paper, on the refusal of which he incurs the penalty of ten shillings and sixpence. Attendance on business shall not be compulsatory farther than thus specified; but if any

Member accept an office, he shall attend under the penalty of five shillings for every wilful omission.

Every Ordinary Member shall give in his paper the Meeting before it be read, and shall announce it the Meeting before he gives it in. He must write it on paper of a certain size, that it may be bound up, if voted; and the paper must circulate among the Members the week before it is discussed, and the last Member must leave the paper in the Academy room on the day of meeting, under the penalty of half a crown.

The Academy may request any Member or Committee of Members, to investigate any particular point in such subjects as their studies or taste may have led them particularly to pursue. In like manner, a committee may be named to examine any new and interesting publication, discovery, &c. and report on such to the Academy.

On a motion to that purpose, a Committee may be named to try any new and instructive experiment or experiments or course of experiments which the Society shall please to institute. If any of the Academicians wish to perform an experiment of his own, he must perform it before the Academy at his own expense.

To the account of new experiments undertaken by the Academy, the name of the proposer or proposers shall be affixed, unless it shall have suffered such alterations as to render it the property of several. The new conclusions drawn from old facts and experiments, shall render the experiment in a great degree the property of the arguers or reasoners.

2. The duty of Corresponding Members shall be to communicate to the Academy such observations as shall seem worthy of its attention. They shall be elected unanimously, and shall not attend the Meetings or Committees of the Academy unless invited expressly.

3. Honorary members shall be chosen unanimously from gentlemen well known for their abilities.

Two dissenting voices shall exclude an Ordinary Member; no ballot shall be admitted, but reasons of opposition and support may be stated.

SECTION III.

The order of business shall be,

1. Minutes of last Meeting read and revised.

2. Private business, as funds, &c. settled, reports of the business of Committees received.

3. Philosophical news discussed, and notices of new publications given in.

4. Committees of inquiry and experiment named.

5. Reports of Committees of inquiry and experiment received.

6. Regular papers read and conversed on.

7. Communications of correspondents considered.

8. Papers noticed, given in, and appointed.

SECTION IV.

Office-bearers shall be named at the first Meeting of the Academy, and continued during pleasure.

1. A President to superintend.

2. A Secretary to take concise minutes of what passes, to correspond officially with those gentlemen who shall be elected Corresponding Members, or other correspondents not Members, and to superintend the binding of papers, &c.

3. A Treasurer to keep the cash-accounts of receipt and expenditure, and to give out such sums for experiments, books, &c. as the Academy shall vote.

SECTION V.

1. Every Member on admittance shall pay five shillings.

2. Every Member shall pay sixpence weekly.

3. Donations of apparatus, books, &c. shall be received.

4. Books purchased shall be proposed by the Committee, and then voted by the Academy.

Messrs. Leyden and Logan were appointed Secretaries, and Mr. Laug Treasurer; it was resolved to choose Presidents *pro tempore* every Meeting.

Messrs. Brougham, Rogerson, and Birbeck, were appointed a Committee to examine the Philosophical Transactions of London for 1790, p. ii. Mr. Birbeck was appointed to examine Priestley's Experiments on Atmospherical Air.

The Academy then adjourned to Saturday 14th January.

Meeting 9th September 1797.

Mr. Erskine, *President.*

Mr. Brougham. Mr. Leyden.
Mr. Reddie. Mr. Brown.

THE Minutes of last Meeting were read. Thereafter, the Academy having, on Mr. Reddie's suggestion, taken into consideration the inconveniences resulting from the want of general principles, which might be taken for granted in all physical inquiries, and from the free and unconstrained introduction of metaphysical points, on which the members, either from the strength of *speculative or practical* habits, or the abstract nature of the subjects themselves, can never come to an agreement, judged it expedient to adopt the following principles, reserving to themselves the power of altering or modifying them as experience shall dictate.

1. Mind exists,—a something, of the essence of which we know nothing, but the existence of which we must suppose, on account of the effect which it produces; that is, the modification of which we are conscious.

2. Matter exists,—a something, of the essence of which we are entirely ignorant, but the existence of which we necessarily believe, in consequence of the effects which it produces; that is, the sensations and perceptions which we receive by means of the organs of sense.

N. B.—Under these two heads are excluded, the suppositions of mind being a bundle of ideas, and matter a collection of properties, for a bundle of effects can never constitute a cause.

3. Every change indicates a cause; but of the nature of necessary connexion we are entirely ignorant.

The Academy also exclude the following questions, to the effect of prohibiting any conversation on them, but without preventing the Members from hearing of them incidentally, in papers not professedly on that subject, or taking for granted any opinion connected with them, as the foundation of a hypothetical train of reasoning.

1. The question as to a first cause, or infinity of causes.

2. The questions concerning

The Action and Passion of Mind;
Liberty and Necessity;
Merit and Demerit;
Self-Love and Benevolence.

3. All general questions as to the nature of evidence; establishing as sufficient grounds of belief, besides the evidence of sense and consciousness, that of memory; that of abstract truth, whether mathematical or metaphysical; that of experience or conclusion, from what has been, to what will be, and that of human testimony.

4. Questions concerning abstract ideas, establishing that we have general ideas; that is, ideas of something in which a number of objects agree.

5. The question of existence of rights.

The Academy then adjourned to 16th instant.

Meeting 30th September 1797.

Mr. Erskine, *President.*

Mr. Brougham.	Mr. Lang.
Mr. Brown.	Mr. Gillespie.
Mr. Leyden.	

Mr. Brougham was appointed to examine Holcroft's translation of Count [illegible]berg's Travels, and to report the important notices.

Messrs. Brown, Lang, Gillespie, and Brougham, were appointed a Committee to examine the strata of granite embedded in schistus, on the [illegible]and in the bed of the Water of Leith.

Meeting January 20th, 1798.

Mr. Brougham, *President.*

Mr. Gillespie.	Mr. Copland.
Mr. Brown.	Mr. Murray.
Mr. Reddie.	Mr. Erskine.
Mr. Horner.	Mr. Robertson.
Mr. Alex. Lang.	Mr. Jas. Lang.
Mr. Logan.	

The Minutes of last Meeting were read.

The Academy resolved, "That corresponding Members shall henceforth be subject to contributions, and be considered in every other respect as ordinary Members, while they reside in Edinburgh."

The Academy also resolved, "That the analyses and papers of last year shall be bound up in two separate volumes; and Mr. Horner, with the two secretaries, were appointed a Committee to arrange them, and cause them to be bound."

The Academy farther resolved, that, (though every paper becomes the property of the Academy, unless the author expressly reserves to himself the liberty of withdrawing it,) yet he shall have the power of making such alterations, as he shall judge proper, upon his paper, after it has been read and discussed.

Mr. Lang then took the chair; and Mr. Brougham and Mr. Horner laid before the Academy two papers, with respect to a reform of the laws.

It was resolved that there should be an election twice a-year, on the first Meeting of November, and on the first Meeting of June, of three Presidents: That the duty of the President for the evening shall be, in the words of Mr. Brougham's motion, "To keep order as he pleases, without limiting the freedom of discussion; to prevent the conversation from becoming confined, by asking all the Members their opinions, and not allowing a few to engross too great a share; to keep the speakers from wandering from the subject; to direct their attention, at intervals of silence, to what he thinks the most interesting branches of the subject; to declare, at the end of the meeting, on which side he conceives the opinions of the majority to be; and, upon his election to the office, to make himself acquainted immediately of the laws, customs, and history of the last past."

Resolved, that the philosophical news shall be the first part of literary business; and that the literary shall precede the private business.

Resolved, that a corresponding secretary be elected annually, whose office and business shall be, in the words of Mr. Brougham's motion, "To have the sole charge of the communication which the Academy has with correspondents, corresponding and honorary members, and persons not connected with it by any of these relations.

Regulations. 1. If any member holds a correspondence which comes within the office of the corresponding secretary, he shall give in to that secretary a copy of, or extracts from, such letters as may concern the Academy. 2. The letters and papers, which he may himself receive, he shall copy, or cause to be copied, at his own expense, into a book appropriated to that purpose, depositing the originals with the Academy. But if any of the communications thus received, shall be thought worthy of a place among the papers of the Academy, he shall cause them to be transcribed at the Academy's expense. 3. He shall have a discretionary power of answer-

ing, as he pleases, the letters received by him. But if the subject be difficult, or the measures discussed weighty, it is recommended to him to consult the Academy, if a meeting be near; otherwise, to ask the advice of the Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurer. 4. It shall be his peculiar charge and power, (subject to the aforesaid regulations,) to direct the attention of correspondents to such subjects as they may investigate, and to transmit any requests to that purpose from the Academy. 5. Under similar regulations, he shall likewise have a discretionary power of commencing new connections, introducing such correspondents to the notice of the Academy, and of proposing candidates for corresponding seats. 6. He shall enter in the correspondence book, all the letters or memorials which he writes to such correspondents or corresponding members, with the dates of their being written, and shall present this book at every meeting, to be read at the commencement of the philosophical news, and consulted by the members present. 7. If he has undertaken any communication in his official capacity, which the Academy [illegible] unworthy of it, he shall at this decision make a recantation of [illegible] subject to the correspondents; a copy of which recantation [illegible] be inserted in the correspondence book. 8. He shall, in an account book appropriated to the purpose, insert dated minutes of all expenses that he may incur in the Academy's service. Ordinary expenses shall be, postage of letters received, and of such as he may think proper to post-pay; account and correspondence books; and carriage of papers, specimens, books, or other parcels. Extraordinary expenses shall consist of such as, in the course of his communications with correspondents, &c. it may be necessary or proper to incur, either for preserving the dignity of the Academy, extending its list of correspondents, or inducing and enabling these to communicate. If, without orders, the corresponding secretary defrays any extraordinaries which the Academy afterwards disapproves of, he is not to receive any reimbursement."

It was further resolved, on the motion of Mr. Horner,

"That the members of the Academy shall, before Saturday the 3d of February next, give in lists of such subjects, in the different branches of philosophical inquiry, as they think deserving the attention of the Academy, and presenting a field for investigation and research.

"That on the said Saturday the 3d of February, a Committee shall be appointed to class the various subjects, thus collected, into

two general lists, one of subjects in the Physics of Matter, the other of subjects in the Physics of Mind: arranging the subjects of each general list in that order which shall appear to the Committee most convenient for investigation; and that this Committee shall present their report at the following meeting of Saturday the 10th of February.

"That, if this arrangement be approved of by the Academy, the subjects contained in each list shall be investigated in regular succession. That the first subject at the head of each list shall be taken into immediate consideration; and being subdivided each into several heads or branches of inquiry, such as the convenience of investigation may suggest, these subdivisions shall be distributed among the members of the Academy at choice, any member being allowed to choose one, or more, or all of the subdivisions. That the two subjects, one relating to the Physics of Matter, the other to the Physics of Mind, shall thus be referred each to a Committee of Investigation; which Committee shall have a discretionary power, like the other Committees of the Academy, of appointing its own meetings and presenting its report. That this report shall consist of the series of papers written by the members of the Committee on the several subdivisions of the subject. That there shall be no objection to the assignment of the same subdivision or subdivisions of the subject to different members, if agreeable to them; provided that those who undertake more than one, shall be obliged to present separate papers, or separate chapters of a paper, on each subdivision undertaken by them, in order that the intention of the Academy in distributing and arranging the subjects of investigation may still be answered."

On the proposal of Mr. Reddie, Mr. William Taylor was admitted a member of the Academy.

Adjourned to Saturday the 27th current.

Note F. Page 80.

Though the distinguished individual who at present conducts the Edinburgh Review had the superintendence of the papers from the commencement, he was not nominated Editor till the publication of the fourth number; and the publication of the third number was, in his absence, intrusted to the care of a gentleman who has long been known as one of the most popular contributors to its pages. It may be proper to add, that none of these eminent

individuals allowed this unfortunate misunderstanding to lessen their sentiments of mutual regard, or to interfere with their habits of intimacy. Dr. Brown had prepared some materials for the fourth number, which were never used. In particular, he had written a very ingenious paper on the second volume of Miss Baillie's Plays. An able article, but in a very different spirit, upon the same work, appeared from another hand. This he regretted no farther than as he was prevented from bearing testimony to the merits of an author of whose genius he entertained a very high idea. He used to take credit to himself for being one of the first in Edinburgh who appreciated her excellences: and he regretted that her works had not met with a more favourable reception. Upon the subject once being mentioned, I recollect he said, with a smile, "I really consider this to be one of the great heresies of the *Edinburgh Review*."

In stating that Dr. Brown's name has scarcely ever appeared in the Edinburgh Journal with the approbation it deserves, I must except a very flattering allusion to the first edition of his work on Cause and Effect, to which reference is made in another part of this work. The Paradise of Coquettes also met with a very high eulogium, but without any idea that he was the author. Indeed, till after his death, his *name* was never mentioned either as a poet or philosopher. In a late number a pledge has been given, which it is anxiously hoped will be speedily redeemed.

NOTE G. Page 82.

The choice of a profession occupied much of his thoughts, and he was long before he finally made up his mind. From the letters of Dr. Currie, he seems to have consulted him upon the subject. I am enabled, by the kindness of Dr. Anderson, the early friend of so many illustrious authors, to insert the following extract from one of Dr. Currie's letters.

"There is no one whose just and undischarged claim sits so heavy upon me as Mr. Brown's. I have the highest opinion of his rising genius, in every point of view, as to learning, disposition, and talents. He has written to me on a subject deeply interesting to him—his future prospects in life. There are great difficulties every way. But whether he is a lawyer or physician he will surmount them; if to his great talents he gives steady application; if he

practises economy and temperance, and takes care to conduct his studies with the due intermixture of air and exercise necessary to preserve the health of the mind. I have made some reflections, in the Life of Burns, on the universality of genius, to which I beg his attention. I look to Brown as entering upon a very brilliant career. He seems to me destined to sustain the honours of Scottish literature, a high destination, in the coming age. As soon as Burns is off my hands I will write to him fully."

If Dr. Brown had come forward to the bar, his success would have been almost certain. He possessed great powers of ready speaking, and saw, by a glance, all the bearings of the most complicated questions, leaving no loop-note for his adversary to escape. One of the most acute and subtle pleaders of our bar has often declared, that if there was a difficulty he could not unravel he would apply to *Tom Brown*. I am not sure, however, whether there might not have been an over subtilty in his reasonings, and that he might not have taken sufficiently into account the views and talents of his hearers. He would have been apt also to refer his facts to the constitution of our nature, rather than to the principles of any system of laws; which, though it ultimately might have been of advantage to the science of law itself, would probably, in the first instance, have operated unfavourably to his own success. He could not but be aware of the importance of accommodating his arguments to the capacities and views of those he had to do with; but he did not always act upon his own convictions. In the early part of his life he occasionally indulged in cards, and was very successful as a whist player. The whole art of his success, he once told me, consisted in a quick discovery of the play of his partner, and in an immediate conformity to it, even though contrary to the rule. This the scientific players could not condescend to, and played so well that they lost the game. In the great game of life he forgot, I suspect, that his method was equally important; or rather, perhaps, he chose to lose the stake, rather than condescend to any thing *unscientific*. The following letter, which I received from one of Dr. Brown's most valued friends, will be read with great interest, as relating to this and to another very important subject.

"From Dr. Brown's astonishing acuteness of discrimination, and power of analysis, exhibited even at any early period of life, I

anticipated, while he was a student of law, many original and enlightened views in the science of Jurisprudence. And, when he afterwards relinquished the more lucrative practice of medicine, to attain the higher honours of the chair of Moral Philosophy, and to give free scope to the exercise of his great metaphysical talents, I frequently urged him, with all the earnestness of friendship, to sacrifice the amusement of writing occasional pieces of poetry, and to devote himself to the completion of that branch of the third part of his course, which would have embraced the doctrines of political economy. In that department, I was persuaded, his unrivalled acumen would have detected many errors, and introduced a precision of phraseology, a simplicity of doctrine, and a luminous arrangement previously unknown. And the only apprehension I entertained of his success was, that the fineness of his intellect, and his little intercourse with the coarser part of the species, might have rendered him less disposed to take into practical calculation the obstacles to improvement, which arise from the very nature of man, and from the circumstances in which he is placed, and *that friction* which constantly impedes the wheels of the machine of civil society even under the best arrangement which it has hitherto been able to attain."

Note H. Page 96.

Dr. Brown published two other pamphlets upon the same occasion. The one was entitled, "A Short Criticism of the Terms of the Charge against Mr. Leslie in the Protest of the Ministers of Edinburgh, as explained by them in their late Pamphlet." Of this pamphlet, I think it due to the memory of Dr. Brown to insert the high testimony of Mr. Playfair, in his "Letter to the Author of the Examination of Professor Stewart's short Statement of Facts."

"On the subject of your metaphysical argument, as managed either in the General Assembly or in your Examination, I have no desire whatever to enter. It has already received what seems to me a masterly and victorious refutation, when, by a substitution, as clear and exact as could be expected in the solution of an algebraic question, you are proved to have accused Mr. Leslie of denying an identical proposition. It is no ordinary degree of merit, amid the obscurity of your language, and from the multitude of

your contradictions and tautologies, to have extracted this simple and curious result, and to have done so with the evidence of a mathematical demonstration." Pp. 72, 73.

The other pamphlet to which I referred, is entitled, an "Examination of some Remarks in the Reply of Dr. John Inglis to Professor Playfair." It may be read for its ingenuity and keen and delicate satire, when the interest in the pamphlet to which it refers, and even in the general question, has passed away. I have no wish, however, to revive the dispute in this place. The opinion of the public in regard to the whole proceedings is too decided to allow any apprehensions of an attempt at a repetition of them. I may remark, however, that in some passages in Dr. Brown's two pamphlets may be discovered the secret cause of much of the opposition that he afterwards met with.

NOTE I. Page 131.

Though, in the paragraph to which this note refers, I say that the discussion to resolve itself entirely into a point of fact, [illegible] from any idea that Dr. Brown's views regarding power [illegible] similar to those of the philosophers that preceded him, or that the [illegible] possessed of little value. The value of Mr. Hume's speculations has been admitted by all the great men who have succeeded him, particularly by Mr. Stewart, and by the late lamented Mr. Horner, who (in a paper in the Edinburgh Review, which was well known to be written by that distinguished gentleman) has spoken of the *Essay on Necessary Connexion*, as the "most valuable contribution to philosophical logic that has been made since the publication of Lord Bacon's writings." Indeed, when we consider the views of the ancients on the subject of causation, which, it is now allowed on all hands, more than any thing else, misled them in their investigations; when we consider that Des Cartes lays it down as a maxim, "Perspicuum est optimam philosophandi viam nos sequuturos, si ex ipsius Dei cognitione rerum ab eo creatarum cognitionem deducere conemur, ut ita scientiam perfectissimam, quæ est effectuum per causas, acquiramus;"—when we consider Bacon's notions about the possibility of inducing forms;—when we consider that Locke himself has stated, that bodies produce ideas in us by impulse, "the only way which we can conceive bodies operate in," (Locke's Essay, book ii. chap. 8.);—when we consider all this, with what pity or indignation we may view Mr. Hume's scepticism, it is [illegible]

possible not to feel that he has laid science under no common obligation to him, in removing the rubbish from around our ideas of causation, that had impeded so often the efforts of the philosophers who preceded him. But while this much may be allowed to Mr. Hume, it must also be stated, that his analysis is far from being complete; that both his thought and language are often deficient in precision; and that his essay, too, contains opinions that lead to dangerous conclusions, (though the danger, as I shall immediately show, has been overrated.)—Dr. Brown has supplied Mr. Hume's deficiencies. His analysis is at once comprehensive and minute; his work is remarkable for precision; he has introduced into it many original and profound views, and he has removed completely all that can be considered as of a dangerous tendency in Mr. Hume's disquisition. That such a work was wanted, no one can doubt, who has read all the jargon that was written and spoken in the famous Leslie case, by men of liberal education at least, and many of them far [illegible]ing deficient in acuteness. The merits of the first edition [illegible]. Brown's work was borne ample testimony to by Mr. Horne [illegible] whose approbation may be considered as fame,) in the article [illegible] which frequent allusion has been made. Many, however, consi[illegible]red the argument, as conducted in the first edition, to be more ingenious than solid. But I never knew any one, who was at all competent to judge of metaphysical discussions, who did not rise convinced by the perusal of his last edition. The testimony that Mr. Playfair, so honourably to his candour, bore to its merits, has been alluded to; and there was one highly respectable individual, who took a decided and an active part against Mr. Leslie, who candidly acknowledged that the fuller elucidation of the doctrines as to causation, in the third edition, had convinced him that he had been in the wrong.

Dr. Brown has proved, by many quotations, that it is altogether unjust to accuse Mr. Hume himself of denying the idea of power. (Cause and Effect, chap. iv. sect. 6.) In the Essay on Necessary Connexion, Mr. Hume certainly does state as clearly as language can express, that we have an idea of necessary connexion. Dr. Reid was the first who represented him as maintaining the opposite doctrine; and his views, I presume, have been copied by the writers who followed him, without their putting themselves to the trouble of consulting Mr. Hume's writings for themselves.

That Mr. Hume's account of the *origin* of our idea of power was erroneous, Dr. Brown has completely established. (Cause and Effect, chap. iv. sect. 3.) He has scarcely, perhaps, succeeded so well in showing, that Hume's notions respecting the origin of the idea does not lead to dangerous consequences. Though even here, too, the facts are rather in Dr. Brown's favour. Mr. Stewart has ascribed the following argument to Mr. Hume, and it seems very generally imagined that it is the argument which Mr. Hume considered as most conclusive. "He," (Mr. Hume) "takes it for granted, that we have no other idea of cause and effect, than of two successive events which are invariably conjoined; that we have, therefore, no reason to think that any one event in nature is necessarily connected with another, or to infer the operation of power from the changes we observe in the universe." (Outlines of Moral Philosophy, sect. 254.) Now, upon turning to Mr. Hume's Essay on Providence and a Future State, we find this argument only very darkly hinted at, and by far the greater part of his reasoning turns upon another point altogether. Taking it for granted, that we have no right to suppose more to be in the cause than what is sufficient to produce the witnessed effect, he argues, in a manner that is almost as disgraceful to his understanding as to his heart; not, however, against the *existence of a cause* of the phenomena we witness, but against the *perfection of the attributes* of the being that is the cause. "So far as the traces of any attributes at present appear, so far may we conclude these attributes to exist. The supposition of farther attributes is mere hypothesis." (Hume's Essays, vol. ii. p. 144.) Now, my purpose in making this statement, is to show, that Hume drew his conclusions, in this Essay, from principles that will not be disputed, by those who hold sentiments altogether different from him in regard to the origin of the idea of power; and that it is not by attacking his doctrines as to causation that his conclusions are to be avoided; but by showing that he reasons erroneously from his own principles.—At all events, it is surely hard, that when Dr. Brown has proved that Mr. Hume maintained that we had an idea of power, and has even (chap. iv. sect. 6.) attempted to demonstrate the impossibility of Mr. Hume's maintaining the contrary doctrine, which is so "completely opposite to the feelings of which every mind is almost every moment conscious:"—it is certainly hard, that the charge is not only repeated against Mr.

Hume, but that even Dr. Brown himself is involved in it along with him.

I may here insert a testimonial in favour of Dr. Brown, though it has no connexion with the present subject, farther than that it originally formed a part of this Note as it appeared in the Christian Instructor:—"In common with the illustrious men of science who adorn your country, I have to lament the unexpected death of Dr. Brown. His sagacity, his acuteness, his fairness, his candour, the general perspicuity, and the occasional splendour, of his diction, were to me decisive proofs of the wisdom and impartiality which guided the Edinburgh electors, in looking out for a man not unworthy to succeed such a man as yourself. They must have been aware of your extensive and permanent celebrity; they must have felt, that the credit of their University depended upon their proper choice of a successor. They acted up to their high and sacred duty, and thus sustained the credit of their renowned university, in the estimation of all scholars and all philosophers, not only in Scotland, but throughout all Europe."—*Extract from a Letter of Dr. Parr to Mr. Stewart.*

NOTE K. Page 161.

(Letter to Dr. Gregory's Patients.)

A person who asks the advice of only one physician, must no doubt be surprised, and may perhaps be displeased, at receiving the advice of two. It is therefore necessary to explain the reason of such a singular deviation from the common practice of my profession.

For a long time past I have found it difficult, and sometimes impossible, to avoid considerable delays in answering professional letters, and in giving my opinion and advice in writing, in cases, the histories of which were sent to me from distant places. These delays were always vexatious to myself, and often distressing to my patients; many of whom earnestly required to have my answer and advice by return of post, and all of whom would confidently expect to receive it in two or three days at farthest. But this no exertions of diligence could enable me to accomplish. Independently of the time required to consider many of the cases sent to me for my opinion, the time often required to write (whether with my own hand, or by dictating to a secretary, as had long been my

practice) a proper opinion and advice, in one case, was more than I could command, from the more urgent calls of professional duty, in several days; and it sometimes happened that I received several such letters and cases in one day; perhaps more than I could answer properly in ten. The delay in answering them was the more vexatious to some of those patients who consulted me by letter, that I was not at liberty to answer their letters just in the order in which I received them, being obliged to answer the most urgent of them in preference to the less urgent, in which a delay, even of several days, could be of no material bad consequence. These delays and inconveniencies have often been much increased by my being called to distant visits in the country, implying, necessarily, an absence of several days from Edinburgh, with little or no time or opportunity to answer such letters, or give my opinion and advice in such cases as I had previously received; while, in the mean time, several more were accumulating upon me.

The consequence has been, that for a long time past I have almost constantly been in arrear of professional writing, and that, in the course of the last three months, this arrear has gradually increased upon me.

In these circumstances, I found myself reduced to the dilemma of either refusing to give my advice in writing to patients, (whether in Edinburgh or at a distance,) who required it of me, or else procuring the aid of one of my brethren, who might assist me in that part, and occasionally in other parts of my professional duty.

The former alternative would certainly have been thought very disobliging at least, if not worse. I have therefore preferred the latter; and I think myself very fortunate in having obtained the assistance of my friend Dr. Thomas Brown, as my coadjutor in that part of my professional labours.

It will easily be believed, that, in such circumstances, for my own sake, as well as that of my patients, I should anxiously wish to have the best assistance that I could procure. But Dr. Thomas Brown has been so well known, even from early youth, as a man of talents, and learning, and science, that there can be no occasion for any testimonial of mine in his favour. He was for several years my pupil in the University of Edinburgh, in which he took his degree of Doctor of Physic in 1803; and he is now a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in this city.

The arrangement that we have made leaves each of us at full liberty to have patients of whom the other will know nothing; which, in many cases, must be very desirable to our respective patients, as well as to ourselves individually:—but no written directions to any patients will be given, under our joint names, that have not previously been the subject of consultation between us. Every such paper of directions as the inclosed, of course, expresses our joint opinion.

By this arrangement, therefore, patients who consult me may profit, and certainly can lose nothing. As the arrangement is made, not only for the benefit of my patients, but also for our own, and chiefly for my convenience, it is on no account to bring any additional expence on those persons who may do me the honour to ask my professional advice.

JAMES GREGORY, M. D.

St. Andrew's Square, Edinburgh,
Dec. 1, 1806.

NOTE L. Page 196.

In his preliminary lecture, after his appointment, he introduced, as is usual in such cases, some remarks respecting the circumstances of his appearance, and the character of his predecessors, which, not being applicable but in the first lecture after an appointment, were, in the succeeding years, laid aside. Though they could not with propriety have been introduced in the printed lectures, they are well worthy of being preserved, and I am happy in being able to present them to the reader.

"Two of the most illustrious of my predecessors are yet alive. One of them, long retired from academic labours, in the enjoyment of a repose dignified by old age, and virtue, and literary glory, is known to you, perhaps, only as an author. Yet the historian of Rome, and the author of the Essay on Civil Society, has not trusted his glory to those works alone. In consigning his fame to posterity, he has availed himself of his labours in this place; and, in his System of Moral and Political Philosophy, has given to the world a splendid memorial of his academic eminence. Of the impression, however, which his lectures produced on the minds of those who heard them, and of the consequent interest which they

attracted to his subject, I can speak only from the report of his friends and pupils.

"It is *not* so with his illustrious successor, now unfortunately retired from the active exertions of that chair which he so long and so gloriously filled. Of all which he was in this place, I can speak from more than report,—from those feelings which I have shared in common with his whole auditory, and which many of you, probably, have had the happiness to partake. It is impossible for me —if, on an occasion like the present, I may be allowed to refer to my own feelings—it is impossible for me to forget the time when I sat where you now sit, and when all the wonders and all the delights of intellectual philosophy were first revealed to me, by that luminous reason, which could have given perspicuity even to the obscurest science, and that eloquence, which must have rendered any science delightful.

"There is in every bosom some love of truth, as there is a love of light in every eye that is capable of vision. But the permanent effect of indifference, or zealous interest, which truth produces in the mind, depends as much on the mode in which knowledge is communicated, as on the knowledge itself. In this respect, science is truly like that common sunshine, to which it has been so often compared. It is not in the mere intensity of light that the charm consists. The chief enchantment is in the diversity of colours into which it flows, *adorning* every object which it enables us to *perceive*. And though it would have been no small blessing of nature to have poured light on the eye of man, though all had been *one whiteness*, distinguishing objects only as more or less brilliant, how much more gracious is her bounty, when she spreads, in inexhaustible profusion of tints, her innumerable blossoms at our feet,—when she can bid us look to the valley, and the rock, and the forest, and the ocean, and the heavens, and enjoy, in all its magnificent varieties, that radiance, from which, in its undivided splendour, the eye must soon have turned away, with weariness and pain.

"In this happy art, of throwing, on every subject which he treated, not *light* alone, but those colours which render light itself enchanting, Mr. Stewart was eminently successful. Yet the great merit of his lectures was something more than this. It was not the mere statement of a series of truths in most lucid order, and

the decoration of these with a rich and varied profusion of imagery and appropriate expression, but an eloquence of a higher kind; that eloquence of *emotion*, the most animating because itself the most animated, to which genius indeed is necessary, but which genius alone is incapable of producing. There are many most profound reasoners, who lay down their series of arguments so demonstratively, and yet so coldly, that our assent, which we cannot withhold from them, may almost be said to be reluctant; and there are many most ingenious rhetoricians who know how to adorn whatever they write or say, with ornaments so rich and so faultless, that we almost feel it a sort of injustice not to be delighted with them, and who want nothing to prove them truly eloquent, but the sympathy of those whom they address. Far different was the eloquence of Mr. Stewart. Even in treating of subjects abstract and severe in themselves, it made itself truly felt, as *eloquence of the heart*. It did not merely *convince* of truth, but it *impressed* with the conviction. It assimilated, while the magic lasted, every mind to its own ardour, and thus producing that philosophic spirit, which is better than philosophy, led the mind, beyond the mere acquiescence of the moment, to dwell on the subjects which it loved, and examine and discover for itself.

"On the loss which you have suffered, and which the University has suffered, by the retirement of my illustrious colleague, it is unnecessary to enlarge. But there is some comfort in thinking that he is not wholly lost to us; that in his retirement he will continue that great office of instruction, which he began and prosecuted so indefatigably in this place; and that, in his writings, we shall still be partakers of all that eloquence which outlives the moment.

"In the perusal of the works, with which his leisure cannot fail to enrich us, you may truly conceive yourselves as listening to him still; not indeed in a narrow auditory, but with that great audience of mankind, in which, from the long series of generations that are yet to exist, patriots and philosophers are listening with you, inspired and animated to virtue by the same truths, with which he instructs, and warms, and purifies his contemporaries. 'Neque enim debet operibus ejus obesse, quod vivit. An si inter eos quos nunquam vidimus floruisset, non solum libros ejus, verum etiam imagines conquireremus, ejusdem nunc honor præsentis et gratia quasi satietate langueseet? At hoc pravum malignumque est,

non admirari hominem admiratione dignissimum, quia videre, alloqui, audire, complecti, nec laudare tantum, verum etiam amare contingit.'"

Note M. Page 215.

This tendency is referred to in a passage quoted by Mr. Stewart from d'Alembert. "The bias we acquire in consequence of habits contracted in infancy, to refer to a substance material and divisible, what really belongs to a substance spiritual and simple, is a thing well worthy of the attention of metaphysicians. Nothing is perhaps more extraordinary in the operations of the mind, than to see it transport its sensations out of itself, and to spread them, as it were, on a substance to which they cannot possibly belong. It would be difficult," Mr. Stewart adds, "to state the fact in question in terms more brief, precise, and perspicuous."* In making this remark, Mr. Stewart must surely have forgotten the passage in the *Leviathan* from which I have borrowed the phrase in the text, in which Hobbes incidentally expresses the same idea infinitely more briefly and forcibly, and with not less precision and perspicuity than the French philosopher, who certainly loses nothing in Mr. Stewart's very elegant translation. The sentence in the *Leviathan*, to which I refer, runs thus: "And though at some certain distance the real and very object seem invested with the fancy it begets in us, yet still the object is one thing, the image or fancy another." *Leviathan*, part 1. chap. i. p. 4. Malebranche has expressed himself with greater elegance than either D'Alembert or Hobbes, and though he confines himself to one of the senses, the present doctrine is obviously implied. *Nous ôtons la lumière et les couleurs à notre âme et à nos propres yeux, pour emparer les objets de dehors.* (*Recherche de la Vérité*, i. 164.) As there is nothing more interesting or more improving to the youthful taste, than to examine how the same idea is clothed by different authors, I shall subjoin the original passage, which Mr. Stewart has so elegantly, and, I may add, so characteristically translated:—*Par une habitude prise dès notre enfance, c'est une chose très singuliere, et digne de l'attention des métaphysiciens, que ce penchant que nous avons à rapporter à une substance matérielle et divisible, ce qui appartient réellement à une substance*

* Supp. to Encyc. Brit. vol. i. p. 98.

spirituelle et simple; et rien n'est peut-être plus extraordinaire dans les opérations de notre âme, que de la voir transporter hors d'elle-même, et étendre, pour ainsi dire, ses sensations sur une substance à laquelle elles ne peuvent appartenir.

NOTE N, Page 225.

As, after a very careful and long investigation, I am fully convinced of the substantial truth of the doctrines originally published by Dr. Gall, it would have been more agreeable to me to have considered them as the standard by which all other systems were to be tried. In the present state of public feeling, however, in regard to the new system, its principles could not be taken for granted without discussion; and it appeared to me, therefore, after reflection, to be better to avoid any direct reference to it in the body of the work. The relation, however, in which the system of Dr. Brown stands to the science of phrenology, is of too important a nature to allow it to be entirely passed over. And indeed, while I conceive it to be due to the memory of Dr. Brown, not to *obtrude* a subject that can scarcely be named without exciting in many an almost insuperable prejudice, I conceive it also to be due to myself to state, that this is my sole reason for not giving the question a more prominent place. Even in its applications to what Dr. Brown has called the physiology of mind, and to the physiology of our corporeal part, the discovery of Dr. Gall is in the highest degree interesting; and when it is considered in its relation to the other sciences, and in all the variety of its practical bearings, I cannot but consider it as the most important discovery that was ever made. The time is long gone by since this subject could legitimately be treated with ridicule; and the absurdity of employing this weapon against it will appear still more obvious, when I mention that many of Dr. Brown's doctrines correspond in a very remarkable degree with the new system. I am convinced that the time is speedily approaching when, great as Dr. Brown's merits in other respects will always be allowed to be, his greatest merit will be seen to consist in the near approach that he has made to many of the doctrines of phrenology, without the aids of the instrument that phrenology presents.*

* Upon this subject I willingly transcribe the remarks of my excellent friend, Mr. Combe, which he has introduced into his *Elements of Phreno-*

It may here be proper to mention it as a part of Dr. Brown's history, that his attention, at a very early period, was directed to the subject, and that he was the author of an article in the third number of the Edinburgh Review, upon the work of Villiers. The system was brought forward by that superficial writer in such a shape that it is not to be wondered at that it should have been rejected. At the same time, Dr. Brown, in his article, defends the doctrine against the objection brought against it from the supposition that it leads to materialism or fatalism. His attention was afterwards directed to the subject by Mr. Combe's Essays; and after reading that work, he stated it to me, as his opinion, that the principle that the primitive feelings of the mind are connected with particular parts of the brain, was a subject worthy of investigation, as there was nothing *a priori* against such an idea. At the same time, he conceived that Drs. Gall and Spurzheim had proceeded farther than they were warranted by facts; and he conceived that a comparison between

logy. "I embrace this opportunity of paying a humble tribute to the talents of the late Dr. Thomas Brown. The acuteness, depth, and comprehensiveness of intellect, displayed in his works on the Mind, place him in the highest rank of philosophical authors; and these great qualities are equalled by the purity and vividness of his moral perceptions. His powers of analysis are unrivalled, and his eloquence is frequently splendid. His "Lectures" will remain a monument of what the human mind was capable of accomplishing, in investigating its own constitution by an imperfect method. In proportion as phrenology becomes known, the admiration of his genius will increase; for it is the highest praise to say that, in regard to many points of great difficulty and importance in the philosophy of mind, he has arrived, by his own reflections, at conclusions harmonizing with those obtained by phrenological observation. Of this, his doctrine on the moral emotion discussed in the text (Conscientiousness) is a striking instance. Sometimes, indeed, his arguments are subtle; his distinctions too refined; and his style is circuitous; but the Phrenologist will pass lightly over these imperfections: for they occur only occasionally, and arise from mere excess of the faculties of Secretiveness, Comparison, Causality, and Wit; on a great endowment of which, along with Concentrativeness, his penetration and comprehensiveness depended. In fact, he possessed the organs of these powers largely developed, and they afford a key to his genius."

the development and manifestations of the lower animals should be especially attended to, because in them the motives were less mixed.

I may mention that the knowledge of the subject was at that time much more imperfect in this country than it now is, and that if he had been acquainted with the views that are now entertained, some of the facts that appeared to him inconsistent with the system would have presented no difficulty. His own head afforded a very striking confirmation of the system. His forehead was very fully developed in what Dr. Gall has denominated the *faculté métaphysique*, and Dr. Spurzheim the faculty of Causality. The correspondence between the other parts of his cerebral organization and his character, though they presented some apparent difficulties, was, when fully understood, equally remarkable.

The first and most obvious correspondence between the doctrines of phrenology and the system of Dr. Brown, is the resolving of the powers into simple and relative suggestion and the emotions—corresponding with the knowing and reflecting faculties, and the propensities and sentiments. Many of the subdivisions also correspond in a very wonderful manner: though it is not to be denied that there are differences also. At present, however, I must confine myself to general topics, without descending to particulars.

The leading doctrine of phrenology is, that different portions or organs of the brain are connected with the primitive feelings of the mind. The truth of this position can obviously be ascertained only by observation. But taking it for granted that it is true, it may be asked how it can be reconciled with the great principle to which so frequent reference has been made, that the powers, thoughts, and feelings of the mind are not different from the mind, but merely the mind itself existing in different states.

It requires but little reflection to be satisfied that the introduction of cerebral organs does not in any degree affect Dr. Brown's leading principle. The cerebral organs are not the mind—nor is any state of these organs the mind. The mind we believe to be a simple and indivisible substance. And the only difference that the doctrines of phrenology introduce in regard to Dr. Brown's principle is, that instead of the feelings and thoughts being merely the relations of the simple substance mind to its own former states or to external objects, they are the relations of the simple substance mind to certain portions of the encephalon.

In looking upon any object—as snow—we have the notion of a certain colour. Now the notion is not in the snow but in the mind. That is, the notion of colour is the mind existing in a certain relation to an external object. But it is allowed on all hands, that there is an intervening step between the snow and the mind. There is an affection of the optic nerve. The notion of colour, then, is the mind existing in a certain relation to the optic nerve. It will be conceded that this does not alter the question as to the simplicity of the mind. And if this is conceded, it is abundantly obvious that another step in the process might be conceived without taking away from the simplicity of the immaterial part, and that instead of an affection of the optic nerve being the immediate antecedent of the notion of colour, it might be a particular portion of the encephalon. As the notion of colour upon this supposition is a relation of the mind to the organ of colour, it follows that if that organ were changed in any respect, the state of the mind would also be changed. Thus, if it were larger, or of a finer structure, or more active, the perception of colour would be more delicate, or quick, or pleasing. The same remarks might be extended to all the organs. Where the organ of Causality is large, as in the case of Dr. Brown himself, then there will be a tendency to reason; which tendency is a state of the mind in relation to a material organ, which state would have been different had the organ been different.

A multitude of organs may all be affecting the mind at the same instant, and in that case a variety of feelings will be experienced. But still the mind is simple, and it is only its relations to these different organs that are complex.

When we say, then, that when we have any power, as for example, of reasoning, we are not to suppose that the power is different from the mind. There is a material organ which is separate from the mind, but the perception of relation is a state wholly mental. One state of the organ may give the perception of relation, another the desire to perceive or discover it; but the perception and desire are both attributes, not of matter but of mind.—The effect of the organ being large or small, active or inactive in different individuals, or upon the same individual at different times, is the subject to which I alluded in the chapter on Cause and Effect, as that which Dr. Brown had not considered.

These remarks will, I flatter myself, be sufficient to show that there is nothing irreconcilable between the principles of the phre-

nological system of Dr. Gall and the physiological system of Dr. Brown. I would willingly return to the consideration of the many particulars in which the systems agree, but a note would not afford room for so extensive a discussion. I cannot leave the subject, however, without remarking, that an acquaintance with the system of Phrenology is most valuable to those who purpose to peruse the works of Dr. Brown; and certainly there are none who will value Dr. Brown's discoveries more than the phrenologists.

It has occurred to me that another difficulty of a metaphysical nature may suggest itself in regard to the principles of phrenology. It may be asked, what is the soul when deprived of the cerebral organs? But the system of Dr. Brown affords us no more light upon this point than the system of Dr. Gall. Indeed, a passage which I have quoted from his Lectures shows that he considered that those who engaged in such inquiries were ignorant of the limits of our faculties. It is only experience that can teach us in what state the soul exists when separated from the body. And in this sense the precept of the poet holds equally in a scientific and in a religious point of view,

"Wait the great teacher Death, and God adore."

Note O. Page 313.

Of the remark in the text I know not whether any better example could be given than that of Locke himself, one of the greatest names of which England has to boast,—a name which ought not to be contrasted but compared with the other lights of the world. He seems to bear the same place in Metaphysics that Newton holds in Physics—both following the methods in these separate departments that the great *Master* of philosophy had pointed out to all future inquirers. That the language of Locke, when he speaks of ideas, is merely metaphorical, and that he did not conceive of them in the manner in which Berkeley and many others have imagined, admits, I conceive, of the most satisfactory proof. And yet the influence of the metaphorical language that he employed,* or rather, of the

* Much has been said of the influence of language in misleading the mind. The cause of error, however, is in general to be sought deeper than in the language that is used, viz. in the prejudices or errors that first adopted the language.

prejudice that occasioned that language to be used once without a metaphor, is to be traced in many of his speculations. What his views really were, in regard to the nature of our ideas, it is not easy to determine. His language upon the subject is contradictory and ambiguous. Probably he had not come to any settled conclusion upon the subject. When he made it, therefore, the matter of immediate and separate reflection, his penetrating mind seized the true solution. But at other times the effect of the language that was then in use, or of the general doctrines that then prevailed, or above all, of the natural tendency of the mind to which we have referred, led him to inquiries, and methods of inquiry, that were inconsistent with the juster views to which at other times he had arrived. It is obvious that the third of the heads into which he divides the sciences, at least in so far as ideas are concerned, would, upon clearer doctrines, be seen to be nothing distinct from the first. Indeed, the whole of his work is vitiated by this very circumstance. He entitles his work an Essay upon the Human Understanding, but it is obviously rather a work upon the materials upon which the understanding exercises itself. And how many repetitions, and illogical divisions, and distinctions and inquiries merely verbal, would have been avoided, if he had kept this principle more steadily in view. By considering an idea as something distinct, and treating chiefly of ideas, he has made his work rather a system of logic than an analysis of the understanding. He defines an idea to be what the mind is employed about in thinking. Now in this way the greater part of the mental phenomena are passed over, without any farther analysis than what was necessary in material qualities. Little more attention, for example, is bestowed upon *perception* than upon solidity. By not keeping this circumstance in view, many doctrines have been ascribed to Locke which he cannot be supposed to have maintained. For example, he states relation to be placing two ideas together. But then he was aware that the mind felt the relation; but the ideas, or rather complex idea, which is the object of the mental feeling—the thing that the mind was employed about—and not the act of the mind itself, was the object of his inquiry. He allowed that the mind feeling this relation might be made the object of reflection itself, and then we would have a new idea; viz. that of the mind perceiving the relation. Now, it is obvious that he would have attained his end more quickly, if he had made it

his object at once to arrive at all the simple ideas of this description; and the fact, that this was not the method he followed, shows that it was by no means his intention to give an analysis of the understanding.

NOTE P. Page 449.

In Dr. Brown's will, which was written by his own hand the year before his death, directions were given that his "body should be carried in the simplest manner to the grave, in his native parish, where his dear father and mother lie."

The following paragraph contains his final directions respecting his books and manuscripts:

"If my books be sold, I will that, previously to the sale, my dear sisters Janet and Eleonora select at their pleasure any number of volumes which they may wish to retain as memorials of the many happy years that have been spent by us together; years to the happiness of which their affectionate kindness has so largely contributed. They, my said sisters Janet and Eleonora, know my wishes with respect to my manuscripts; to them, accordingly, I give the sole possession and control of them. Such of them only are to be published as they recommend for that purpose."

FINIS.

PRINTED BY A. BALFOUR AND CO.

00026491

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 April, 2016